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HISTORY
OF
SCOTLAND.

VOL. VI.

A

H I S T O R Y
OF
S C O T L A N D.

BY
PATRICK FRASER TYTLER, ESQ.

THIRD EDITION.

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HISTORY OF SCOTLAND.

CHAP. I.

REGENCY OF THE EARL OF MORAY.

1567—1569.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>England.</i> Elizabeth.		<i>France.</i> Charles IX.		<i>Germany.</i> Maximilian II.		<i>Spain.</i> Philip II.		<i>Portugal.</i> Sebastian.		<i>Pope.</i> Pius V.
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IMMEDIATELY after his acceptance of the government, Moray invited Throckmorton to a conference. He obeyed, and found the regent and Secretary Lethington sitting together ; upon which he conveyed to them, “ in as earnest and vehement a form as he could set it forth,” the queen his mistress’s severe disapproval of their recent conduct. To this remonstrance Maitland made a bold reply. He renounced, for himself and his colleagues, all intention of harm to the person and honour of his royal mistress in their late proceedings. “ So far from it,” said he, “ Mr Ambassador, that we wish her to be queen of all the world ; but now she is in the state of a person in the delirium of a fever, who refuses every thing which may do her good, and requires all that

may work her harm. Be assured nothing will be more prejudicial to her interest, than for your mistress to precipitate matters. It may drive us to a strait, and compel us to measures we would gladly avoid. Hitherto have we been content to be charged with grievous and infamous titles; we have quietly suffered ourselves to be condemned as perjured rebels and unnatural traitors, rather than proceed to any thing that might touch our sovereign's honour. But beware, we beseech you, that your mistress, by her continual threats and defamations, by hostility, or by soliciting other princes to attack us, do not push us beyond endurance. Think not we will lose our lives, forfeit our lands, and be challenged as rebels throughout the world, when we have the means to justify ourselves. And if there be no remedy but your mistress will have war, sorry though we be, far rather will we take our fortune, than put our queen to liberty in her present mood, resolved as she is to retain and defend Bothwell, to hazard the life of her son, to peril the realm, and to overthrow her nobility.¹

“For your wars,” he continued, “we know them well: you will burn our borders, and we shall burn yours; if you invade us, we do not dread it, and are sure of France; for your practices to nourish dissension amongst us, we have an eye upon them all. The Hamiltons will take your money, laugh you to scorn, and side with us. At this moment we have the offer of an agreement with them in our hands. The queen, your mistress, declares she wishes not only for our sovereign's liberty, and her restoration to her dignity, but is equally zealous for the preservation of the king, the punishment of the murder, and the safety of the

¹ Throckmorton to Elizabeth, Aug. 22, 1567. Keith, p. 448.

lords. To accomplish the first, our queen's liberty, much has been done; for the rest, absolutely nothing. Why does not her majesty fit out some ships of war, to apprehend Bothwell, and pay a thousand soldiers to reduce the forts and protect the king? When this is in hand, we shall think her sincere; but for her charge to set our sovereign forthwith at liberty, and restore her to her dignity, it is enough to reply to such strange language, that we are the subjects of another prince, and know not the queen's majesty for our sovereign." ¹

As soon as Lethington had concluded, Throckmorton, turning to Moray, expressed a hope that such sentiments would at least not meet his approval. He was not "banded" with these lords, he had committed none of their excesses. But Moray was now secure; he had little to fear from Elizabeth, nothing from France, and his answer was as decided, though more laconic than the secretary's. "Truly, my lord ambassador," said he, "methinks you have had reason at the Laird of Lethington's hands. It is true, that I have not been at the past doings of these lords, yet I must commend what they have done; and seeing the queen my sovereign and they have laid on me the charge of the regency, a burden I would gladly have avoided, I am resolved to maintain their action, and will reduce all men to obedience in the king's name, or it shall cost me my life." ²

The ambassador had been long aware that his further stay in Scotland would be totally useless. He had earnestly solicited his recall; and Elizabeth now agreed to it, but ordered him first to make a last remonstrance

¹ Throckmorton to Elizabeth, August 22, 1567, printed by Keith, p. 448, from original, Caligula, C. i. fol. xxxii.

² Ibid. *ut supra*.

in favour of the captive queen, and to request to be admitted to her presence. This, as he had looked for, was peremptorily refused by Moray : they had excluded De Lignerolles, the French ambassador, he said, who had so lately left them ; and it was impossible to admit him. For the rest of his message from the Queen of England, the regent, after his usual fashion, replied to it with great brevity. As to his acceptance of the government, the deed was done ; for calumny he cared little, and would use none other defence than a good conscience and a sincere intention ; to satisfy the queen that his mistress had consented, he could only say, that he had her own word and signature ; for her liberty, its being granted depended upon accidents ; and as to her condition after Bothwell's apprehension, it would be idle, he said, to bargain for the bear's skin before they had him. The ambassador, before he took his leave, was pressed to accept a present of plate in the name of the king. This was declined in strong terms, and on the 29th of August he left the capital for England.

Moray now addressed himself with characteristic decision and courage to the cares of government ; and, to use Throckmorton's expressive phrase, " went stoutly to work, resolved rather to imitate those who had led the people of Israel, than any captains of that age."¹ He instantly despatched the Laird of Grange, and Murray of Tullibardine, with three armed ships, in pursuit of Bothwell, who, after lurking in the north, and in vain attempting to make a party in these remote districts, had fled to Orkney and turned pirate.²

¹ Throckmorton to Cecil, August 20, 1567, in Stevenson's Selections, p. 282.

² Ibid. August 26, 1567, Stevenson's Selections, p. 294. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Bedford to Cecil, Berwick, September 11, 1567.

He next employed the most vigorous measures to compel the whole kingdom to acknowledge the king's government, to secure himself against attack if Elizabeth should meditate it, and to keep up pacific relations with France, which, from the tone all along assumed by De Lignerolles, he was assured would not be difficult. The Hamiltons had made some feeble attempts to prevent the regent being proclaimed within their bounds; but they acted with no fixed plan, had no leader of ability, and gave him little anxiety.¹

A large proportion of the nobles, who had hitherto been hostile or neutral, now sent in their adherence to his government; and Sir James Balfour, the governor of the castle of Edinburgh, delivered that fortress into his hands. This infamous man was the intimate friend of Bothwell, and a principal actor in the king's murder. It might have been expected that Moray, who had lately expressed so much horror for that deed, and so determined a resolution to avenge it, would have been the last to overlook the crime in one of the principal conspirators; but, like other ambitious men, he could make his conscience give way to his interest, as the treaty in question completely proved. Its first stipulation was, that Balfour should have an ample remission as an accomplice in the murder; the next, that before he gave up the keys of the castle, five thousand pounds should be paid down; the last, that he himself should have the priory of Pittenweem, and his son an annuity. All this was agreed to, apparently without difficulty; and only two days after his assuming the regency, Moray in person took possession of the castle.²

¹ Throckmorton to the queen, August 23, 1567, Stevenson's Selections, p. 291.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Throckmorton to Cecil, August 26, 1567. *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 18.

As if to cover the shame of this transaction, the regent made unusual exertions to seize some of the inferior delinquents. Previous to his arrival in Scotland, Captain Blacater had been taken and executed: he now apprehended John Hay of Tallo, a page of the king's called Durham, black John Spens, John Blacater, and James Edmonson.¹ The guilt of Tallo, as a principal agent in the murder, was completely proved; but his examination threw Moray into great perplexity, for, to use Bedford's words to Cecil, he not only "opened the whole device of the murder," but "declared who were the executioners of the same, and went so far as to touch a great many, not of the smallest."² We have already seen that Lethington, Morton, and Argyle, three of the most powerful men in Scotland, were either accomplices in the assassination or consenting to its perpetration; and there can be no doubt that they, amongst others, were implicated in Tallo's confession. But in what manner was Moray to proceed? It was these very men who had placed him in the regency; with them he now acted familiarly and confidentially: their cause could not with safety be separated from his own. He might, indeed, attempt to seize and punish them; but such was their strength, that it would be at the risk of being plucked down from his high office by the same hands which had built him up. The truth, however, probably was, that Moray had been long aware of the true character of the persons by whose successful guilt he now profited, and had determined to favour the higher culprits, whilst he let loose the vengeance of the law upon the lesser delinquents. He could not prevent the people,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Bedford to Cecil, September 5, 1567. And same to same, September 11, 1567.

² Ibid. September 16, 1567.

however, and all the more honest part of the nation, from arraigning such interested conduct; but he little heeded these murmurs; and for the present Hay's examination was suppressed, and his trial indefinitely postponed: Durham the king's page also was kept in prison in irons.¹

The regent now summoned the castle of Dunbar, which was still held for Bothwell by one of his retainers. Its governor affected to resist, but Moray bombarded it in person, and in a few days the garrison capitulated. A last effort of the Hamiltons to get up a resistance was only made to be abandoned; Argyle, who had encouraged it, submitted, bringing with him Boyd, Livingston, and the Abbot of Kilwinning. This last person was deputed by the Archbishop of St Andrews, the leader of the Hamiltons, to make his peace; Huntley and Herries, much about the same time, gave in their adherence to the king's government; and the regent on the 15th of September, informed his friend Cecil, that the whole realm was quiet.²

In the midst of these transactions, Grange returned unsuccessful from his pursuit of Bothwell. He had boasted to Bedford, that he would either bring back the murderer or lose his life in the attempt; but, in giving chase, Grange's ship, one of the largest in the Scottish navy, struck upon a sand-bank, and although he boarded and brought home with him one of Bothwell's vessels, the earl himself, in a lighter craft, escaped to Norway. In one respect the expedition was important, as Hepburn of Bolton, an accomplice in the king's murder, was seized in the ship, and by his confession,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, September 17, 1567, Occurrents out of Scotland.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Bedford to Cecil, 16th Sept. 1567. Ibid. proceedings of the Hamiltons, 17th September, 1567. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, 15th Sept. 1567.

threw additional light on that dark transaction. For the present, however, his revelations were not suffered to be known.¹

Moray now summoned a parliament, (December 15th,) the proceedings of which evince the new regent's complete connexion and sympathy with the party of the reformed church, and demand especial attention. It has been asserted that it was thinly attended; but the remark can only apply to the bishops, who represented the ecclesiastical estate, of whom but four appeared, Moray, Galloway, Orkney, and Brechin. There were present, however, fourteen abbots, twelve earls, sixteen lords and masters, the name given to lords' eldest sons, and twenty-seven commissioners of burghs.² The discussions were opened in a speech by Lethington, of which a copy still remains in his own handwriting; and it were to be wished that its truth and sincerity had been equal to its talent. He alluded to the vast importance of the crisis in which they met, and the subjects upon which they were about to legislate, any one of which would, he said, have been enough to have occupied a parliament. These were, the establishing a uniform religion; the acknowledgment of the just authority of the king, in consequence of the queen's free demission of the crown in his favour; the sanction to be given to the appointment of a regent chosen to act in the king's minority; the reuniting the minds of the nobility; the punishment of the cruel murder of the late king, their sovereign's father; and many other disorders requiring the grave consideration of their lordships. Upon these heads, he said, he would not

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, 11th September, 1567. Moray to Cecil. Also, Melvil's Memoirs, p. 186. Also, 16th September, MS. letter, B.C. Bedford to Cecil.

² Anderson, vol. ii. pp. 228, 229, 230. Also, MS. State-paper Office, December 15, 1567.

dilate; but two points he must not omit, both tending to their great comfort, and calling for deep gratitude. The first was, the success which, in matters of religion, had followed such comparatively small beginnings; the second, their happy fortune in having in the regent a nobleman so excellently qualified to carry their ordinances into execution, whether they related to the church or the commonwealth. "As to religion," said he, "the quietness you presently enjoy, declares sufficiently the victory that God by his Word has obtained among you, within the space of eight or nine years; how feeble the foundation was in the eyes of men, how unlikely it was to rise so suddenly to so large and huge a greatness, with what calmness the work has proceeded, not one of you is ignorant. Iron has not been heard within the house of the Lord; that is to say, the whole has been builded, set up, and erected to this greatness, without bloodshed. Note it, I pray you, as a singular testimony of God's favour, and a peculiar benefit granted only to the realm of Scotland, not as the most worthy, but chosen out by his providence from among all nations, for causes hid and unknown to us, and to foreshow his almighty power, that the true religion has obtained a free course universally throughout the whole realm, and yet not a Scotsman's blood shed in the forthsetting of the whole quarrel. With what nation in the earth has God dealt so mercifully? Consider the progress of religion from time to time in other countries—Germany, Denmark, England, France, Flanders, or where you please: you shall find the lives of many thousands spent before they could purchase the tenth part of that liberty whereunto we have attained, as it were sleeping upon down beds."¹

¹ MS. State-paper Office. An oration of the Lord of Lethington,

When we recollect the events of the few last years — the rising of Moray against the queen's marriage, the murder of Riccio, the flight of Morton, the assassination of Darnley, the confederacy against Bothwell, and the imprisonment of the queen, all of them events more or less connected with the establishment of the Reformation in Scotland — and remember also that Lethington was deeply engaged in them all, it is certainly difficult which most to condemn, the gross inaccuracy of this picture, or the hardihood evinced by its coming from his lips.

But to return to the proceedings of the parliament. The committee of the lords of the articles having been chosen,² the three estates sanctioned the queen's demission of the crown, the king's coronation, and the appointment of Moray to the regency. The pope's authority was next abolished, the act to that effect, passed in the disputed parliament of 1560, being solemnly ratified. All laws repugnant to the Word of God were annulled; and the "Confession of Faith," which had been already read and approved of in a former parliament, was sanctioned and published. All heretics and hearers of mass were made liable to punishment; confiscation of moveables being declared the penalty for the first offence, banishment for the second, and death for the third. Such persons as opposed the Confession of Faith, or refused to receive the sacraments after the Presbyterian form, were declared to be no members of the church of Christ.

at the parliament of Scotland, December 1567, in Lethington's own hand.

² It was composed of the Bishops of Moray, Galloway, and Orkney; the Abbots of Dunfermline, Melrose, Newbottle, Balmerino, St Colm's Inch, Pittenweem, and Portmoak; the Earls of Huntley, Argyle, Morton, Athole, Glencairn, Mar, and Caithness; the Lords Hume, Lindsay, and Sempil; with the Provosts of Edinburgh, Dundee, Montrose, Aberdeen, St Andrews, Cupar, Stirling, and Ayr.

The examination and admission of ministers was declared a prerogative inherent in the church; but to lay patrons was continued the power of presentation, with an appeal to the General Assembly, if their nomination of a qualified person was not sustained by the superintendents and ministers; and, lastly, all kings, at their coronation, or princes or magistrates acting in their place, were bound to take the oath for the support of the true church, and the extirpation of heresy.¹

So far every thing succeeded to the wishes of the reformed clergy; but their endeavour to repossess themselves of the patrimony of the church was not so fortunate. They pleaded a former promise to this effect; and, if we may credit Bishop Spottiswood, the regent showed an anxiety to fulfil it; but the laymen, who had violently seized the property of the church when it was in the hands of the Roman Catholic clergy, manifested the same violence now that their own ministers proposed to resume possession, and, with difficulty, consented to restore to them a third of the benefices.² It was next ordered that a reformation should be made in all schools, colleges, and universities, and that no teachers were to be admitted but such as had been examined and approved by the appointed visiters and superintendents; and, lastly, that, as far as concerned the preaching of the Word, the reformation of manners, and the administration of the sacraments, no other ecclesiastical powers should be acknowledged than those which were now claimed by the Presbyterian church, to which they gave the title of the Immaculate Spouse of Christ.³

¹ Spottiswood, p. 214. Maitland, vol. ii. p. 1006. Black Acts, fol. 1-5, c. 1. 2.

² Maitland, vol. ii. p. 1007.

³ Ibid.

A keen debate arose when the subject of the queen's imprisonment came before the Assembly, which was greatly divided in opinion. Many, who were convinced of their sovereign's guilt, and who had adopted the views lately promulgated by the ministers in their pulpit addresses, contended that she should be brought to a public trial, and, if the crime was proved, punished by the laws like any other subject of the realm. To this it was objected, that the monarch was the source of all authority; that she could not, without absurdity and contradiction, be made amenable to an inferior jurisdiction, but was accountable for her conduct to God alone. It was replied, that extraordinary crimes required extraordinary remedies; but this doctrine was not generally acceptable. The discussion concluded in a resolution, that the imprisonment of the queen should be continued, and an act of parliament passed for the exoneration of those noblemen and barons who had risen in arms for the prosecution of the murder. The terms of this act, which were nearly similar to a previous resolution of the privy council, require a moment's notice, as it is in it that we find the first public mention of those letters of Mary to Bothwell, which, it was afterwards contended, completely proved her guilt. It declared the conduct and transactions of these lords, from the 10th of February (the day of Darnley's murder,) till the present time, to be lawful and loyal; that they should never be subjected to any prosecution for what they had done; because, if the queen were confined, it was solely in consequence of her own fault and demerit, seeing that, by several of her private letters, written wholly with her own hand, and sent by her to Bothwell, and by her ungodly and pretended marriage with him, it was most certain that she was cognizant, art and part, of the murder of

the king her husband. This declaration of the estates having been signed and sealed, and ordered to be printed along with the other statutes, the parliament was dissolved.¹

It appears by an act of privy council, dated the 16th September, 1568, that the Earl of Morton had at that time,² delivered to the regent the little box or coffer, with the letters and sonnets which it contained. It was to these letters that the act now quoted referred; and the partial and unjust conduct of Moray and the parliament need hardly be pointed out. Such documents might or might not be originals; but by every principle of justice, the queen ought not to have been condemned, nor should these letters have been received as evidence of the justice of that condemnation, until she had enjoyed in person, or by her counsel, an opportunity of examining the proofs produced against her. This injustice, however, was little in comparison with another proceeding of Moray's, who, having now tasted the sweets of absolute power, and being determined, at all hazard, to retain it, became little scrupulous of the means which he employed. Sir James Balfour, as we have seen, had been the confidant of Bothwell, and was the depositary of the bond or contract which was drawn up for the murder of the king.³ It had been seen by one of the accomplices in the murder, named Ormiston, who affirmed that Bothwell pointed out certain signatures, which he declared to be those of Argyle, Huntley, Lethington, and Balfour himself.⁴ This profligate

¹ Goodal, vol. ii. pp. 62, 69. The words in the Black Acts, Anderson, vol. ii. p. 221, are, "divers her privie letters written halelie [wholly] with her own hand." The words of the act of privy council are, "divers her privie letters, written and subscribed with her own hand."

² Anderson, vol. ii. p. 257.

³ *Supra*, vol. v. pp. 368, 369.

⁴ *Supra*, vol. v. p. 369.

adherent of Bothwell's kept the bond, along with the queen's jewels and other property of value, in the castle of Edinburgh, which fortress the Duke of Orkney had committed to his charge; but he betrayed the place, as we have seen, to Moray; and, on its delivery, the regent, now all-powerful, might have stipulated for the delivery of all the evidence which threw light upon so foul a plot. In estimating his moral character, which has been highly extolled by some writers, it is instructive to mark in what way he appears to have proceeded. The letters alleged to be written by the queen were preserved, exhibited to the council, and quoted to the parliament as proofs of her guilt. Her jewels and other apparel were delivered up by Balfour¹ to Moray; but the "bond" which connected his friends with the murder, was appropriated by Lethington, committed to the flames, and destroyed for ever. We learn this important fact, which is new in the controversy, from a letter addressed by Drury to Cecil, on the 28th of November, a short time before the meeting of the parliament. "The writings," said he, "which did comprehend the names and consents of the chief for the murdering of the king, is turned into ashes, the same not unknown to the queen; and the same that concerns her part kept to be shown, which offends her." It is true there is here no assertion that the regent himself threw the bond into the fire, and it was Lethington's and Balfour's interest, as it criminated themselves, to have it destroyed; but that Moray consented to its destruction, whilst he preserved the evidence against the queen, the whole

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Bedford to Cecil, Berwick, 5th September, 1567. Ibid. same to same, 11th September, 1567. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, October 15, 1570, and MS. letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Cecil, November 28, 1567.

circumstances appear to me to demonstrate. Drury, in the same letter to Cecil, observed, "that Moray made fair weather with Mary, and was dealing very soundly and uprightly." Sir William's ideas as to upright conduct, unless the expression was used solely with reference to the safety assured by the regent to his own associates, must have been peculiar.

Of this partial dealing he now gave another signal instance, in the trial of those delinquents who were in custody for the king's murder. Their names were Hay of Tallo, John Hepburn of Bolton, George Dalgleish a page or chamberlain, and William Powrie a servant of Bothwell. It was well known at the time of his being apprehended, that Hay, the confident of Bothwell, had not only given a full detail of the murder, but had accused some of the highest nobility of being accomplices in it.¹ It was equally notorious that Captain Cullen, who had been employed in his most secret concerns by the chief murderer, had revealed the whole circumstances,² and that the lords and the regent must have been in possession of his confession. So general was the expectation of these disclosures being made public, that Sir William Drury, in writing to Cecil upon the subject, informed him that Tallo's life had been spared for a little only, until some of the great persons who were acquainted with the cruel deed were apprehended. All, therefore, looked with intense anxiety to the trial of these men; and it was confidently demanded, that as so much pains had been taken in the recent parliament to criminate the queen, the same

¹ Bedford to Cecil, MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. September 16, 1567. Also Drury to Cecil, MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. September 30, 1567.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, June 14, 1567, Berwick. Scrope to Cecil, June 16, 1567, Carlisle, MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C.

care should be employed to discover who else were guilty, that by the publication of the confessions of Cullen, Tallo, and Hepburn, the regent would at length reveal the names of those great accomplices who had hitherto escaped. But Moray had neither the power nor the will to make this exposure. The trials were shamefully hurried over. The culprits were arraigned, convicted, and executed in one day, (January 3.) Although Hepburn of Bolton, in his speech on the scaffold, directly asserted that Argyle, Huntley, and Lethington, had subscribed to the bond for the murder, no arrest of these persons followed; the judicial confessions which were made by him and his accomplices were suppressed at the time; and, when subsequently brought forward to be exhibited in England, it was found that they had been manifestly tampered with, and contained evidence against no one but themselves and Bothwell.¹

These proceedings told strongly against the regent; and, making every allowance for the miserable state of the law in these times, it is impossible to exculpate him from the charge of having lent himself to a plan for the defeat of justice. Nor does it need any great discernment to discover both the means by which the truth was suppressed, and the motive for such base conduct. Argyle was lord justice-general, the head and fountain of the criminal jurisprudence of the country. By his deputy the trials were conducted, and Argyle was a principal accomplice in the king's murder. The confessions were made before the lords of the privy council, and amongst these lords were

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, January 4, 1567-8. MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, January 7, 1567-8. Ibid. Forster to Cecil, Alnwick, 11th January, 1567-8. Ibid. Drury to Cecil, Berwick, 21st January, 1567.

Morton, Huntley, Lethington, and Sir James Balfour, all of them parties to the murder. Lastly, Moray was regent of the realm; but he had been placed in the high office by these very men, and his tenure was still so insecure, that a new coalition might have unseated him.

Such conduct, although politic so far as his own greatness was concerned, disappointed the people, and was loudly condemned. Handbills and satirical poems, which upbraided his partiality, were fixed to the doors of the privy council and of his own house. Of these one was in the following pithy terms:—

“*Quæritur.*

“Why John Hepburn, and John Hay of Tallo, are not compelled openly to declare the manner of the king’s slaughter, and who consented thereunto?”¹

Another was a pasquinade, of which the truth was more striking than the poetry. It bore the title of a letter sent by Maddé unto my Lord Regent and the whole estates, and strongly insinuated that Hay and Hepburn were about to be hurried out of life, and their confessions suppressed, lest they should discover the principal subscribers of the bond for the king’s death.²

By his partial conduct, Moray not only estranged

¹ MS. State-paper Office, B.C. Questions to be absolved by the Lords of the Articles, 4th January, 1567-8.

² MS. State-paper Office, 4th Jan. 1567-8. A letter sent by Maddé to My Lord Regent and the haill estates:—

My lordes all, the king is slain,—
Revenge his cause in hand,
Or else your doing is all but vain,
For all your general Band.

If ye shall punish but *simple* men,
And let the *prinoipal* pass,
Then God and man shall you misken,
And make you therefore base.

* * * *

the people, but it was soon apparent that, notwithstanding all his efforts, he could not long keep his party together. Even in the parliament, his legislation on the subject of religion had been condemned by Athole, Caithness, and the Bishop of Moray; and the provision for the ministers of the church was an unpopular measure with a majority of the lords. He had endeavoured, indeed, to secure the support of the chief nobility and barons by rewards and favours. Lethington had received the sheriffship of Lothian, Hume that of Lauderdale, Morton the promise of the lord high-admiral's place, vacant by the forfeiture of Bothwell; Kirkaldy of Grange had been made governor of Edinburgh castle, and Huntley and Argyle were courted by the prospect held out to them of a matrimonial alliance with the regent's daughter and sister-in-law.¹ But even these prizes and promises sometimes failed in their effect, every one being ready to magnify his own merit, and to anticipate a higher distinction than was bestowed. Nor did it escape observation, that his conduct since his elevation had become haughty and distant to those proud nobles who had so recently been his equals; whilst he was open to flattery, and suffered inferior men to gain his confidence. Even the vigour with which he punished the riot and lawlessness of the border district failed to increase his popularity, the kingdom having been so long accustomed to a more relaxed rule, that justice was construed into tyranny.

Owing to such causes, it was apparent that Moray's government, soon after the dissolution of parliament, was in a precarious state. The Hamiltons hated him; to Lethington intrigue and change seemed to be the

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Berwick, Drury to Cecil, Jan. 4, 1567-8. Huntley's son was to marry his daughter; Argyle's brother, his sister-in-law.

only elements in which he could live ; Herries and the Melvils were strongly suspected ; Balfour, who knew many secrets, and was capable of any treachery, had left court in disgust ; Athole was beginning to be lukewarm ;¹ the friends of the Catholic religion resented his late conduct ; and the people, never long in one mind, began to pity the protracted and rigorous imprisonment of the queen.² All these circumstances were against him ; but they were trivial to the blow which now fell upon him, for it was at this very crisis that Mary effected her escape, in a manner that almost partakes of romance.

Since her interview with Moray, the captive queen had exerted all the powers of fascination, which she so remarkably possessed, to gain upon her keepers. The severe temper of the regent's mother, the lady of the castle, had yielded to their influence ;³ and her son George Douglas, the younger brother of Lochleven, smitten by her beauty, and flattered by her caresses, enthusiastically devoted himself to her interest. It was even asserted that he had aspired to her hand, that his mother talked of a divorce from Bothwell, and that Mary, never insensible to admiration, and solicitous to secure his services, did not check his hopes.⁴ However this may be, Douglas for some time had bent his whole mind to the enterprise, and on one occasion, a little before this, had nearly succeeded ; but the queen, who had assumed the dress of a laundress, was detected

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, Berwick, Jan. 4, 1567-8. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, Berwick, Jan. 21, 1567-8. Ibid. same to same, Berwick, Feb. 2, 1567-8. Also, *ibid.* same to same, Berwick, April 2, 1568.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, 2d April, 1568.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, Berwick, Sept. 30, 1567. Melvil's *Memoirs*, p. 199.

⁴ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, April 2, 1568. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, ——— to Cecil, May 9, 1568.

by the extraordinary whiteness of her hands, and carried back, in the boat which she had entered, to her prison.¹

This discovery had nearly ruined all, for Douglas was dismissed from the castle, and Mary more strictly watched; but nothing could discourage her own enterprise, or the zeal of her servant. He communicated with Lord Seton and the Hamiltons; he carried on a secret correspondence with the queen; he secured the services of a page who waited on his mother, called Little Douglas, and by his assistance at length effected his purpose. On the evening of the 2d of May, this youth, in placing a plate before the castellan, contrived to drop his napkin over the key of the gate of the castle, which, for security, was always placed beside him when at supper, and carried it off unperceived; he hastened to the queen, and hurrying down to the outer gate, they threw themselves into the little boat which lay there for the service of the garrison. At that moment Lord Seton and some of her friends were intently observing the castle from their concealment on a neighbouring hill; a party waited in the village below, while, nearer still, a man lay watching on the brink of the lake.² They could see a female figure, with two attendants, glide swiftly from the outer gate. It was Mary herself, who, breathless with delight and anxiety, sprung into the boat, holding a little girl, one of her maidens, by the hand; while the page, by locking the gate behind them, prevented immediate pursuit. In a moment her white veil, with its broad red fringe, (the concerted signal of success,) was seen glancing in the sun; the sign was recognised and communicated; the

¹ Keith, p. 470.

² Proofs and Illustrations, No. I. from the MSS. of Prince Labanoff; and letter of Kirkaldy to Lochleven, Morton MSS.

little boat, rowed by the page and the queen herself, touched the shore; and Mary, springing out with the lightness of recovered freedom, was received first by George Douglas, and almost instantly after by Lord Seton and his friends. Throwing herself on horseback, she rode at full speed to the Ferry, crossed the Firth, and galloped to Niddry castle, having been met on the road by Lord Claud Hamilton, with fifty horse. Here she took a few hours' rest, wrote a hurried despatch to France, despatched Hepburn of Riccarton to Dunbar, with the hope that the castle would be delivered to her, and commanded him to proceed afterwards to Denmark, and carry to his master, Bothwell, the news of her deliverance.¹ Then, again taking horse, she galloped to Hamilton, where she deemed herself in safety.

The news of her escape flew rapidly through the kingdom, and was received with joy by a large portion of her nobility, who crowded round her with devoted offers of homage and support. The Earls of Argyle, Cassillis, Eglinton, and Rothes; the Lords Somerville, Yester, Livingston, Herries, Fleming, Ross, Borthwick, and many other barons of power and note, crowded to Hamilton. Orders were sent by them to put their vassals and followers in instant motion, and Mary soon saw herself at the head of six thousand men.

She now assembled her council, declared to them that her demission of the government, and consent to the coronation of her son, had been extorted by the imminent fear of death, and appealed for the truth of

¹ Proofs and Illustrations, No. I. MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, April 2, 1568. Also, MS. letter, copy, State-paper Office, ——— to Cecil, May 9, 1568. MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, May 26, 1568. Also, Memoir towards Riccartoun, MS. State-paper Office. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Willok to Cecil, 31st May, 1568.

the statement to Robert Melvil, who stood beside her and solemnly confirmed it. An act of council was then passed, declaring all the late proceedings, by which Moray had become regent, treasonable and of none effect; and a bond drawn up by the nobility for the defence of their sovereign and her restitution to her crown and kingdom, which, in the enthusiasm of the moment, was signed by nine earls, nine bishops, eighteen lords, twelve abbots and priors, and nearly one hundred barons. But the queen, though encouraged by this burst of loyalty, felt a desire to avoid the misery of a civil contest, and in this spirit sent a message to Moray, with offers of reconciliation and forgiveness.¹

The regent was in Glasgow, a city not eight miles from Mary's camp at Hamilton, engaged in public business, and attended only by the officers of the law and his personal suite, when almost at the same instant he received news of the queen's escape and her overtures for a negotiation. It was a trying crisis—one of those moments in the life of a public man which test his judgment and his courage. Already the intelligence, though but a few hours old, had produced an unfavourable effect upon his party. Some openly deserted, and sought the queen's camp; others silently stole away; many wavered; and not a few, whilst they preserved the show of fidelity, secretly made preparations for joining the enemy.

Under these difficult circumstances Moray exhibited that rapid decision and clearness of judgment which mark a great man. When counselled to retire, he instantly rejected the advice. "Retreat," said he,

¹ Keith, p. 475. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, 8th May, 1568. Endorsed in Cecil's hand, "Band of 9 Earls, 9 Bishops, 18 Lords, and others, for defence of the Queen of Scots." Melvil's Memoirs, p. 200. Also, Drury to Cecil, May 7, 1568. Keith, p. 474.

“must not for a moment be contemplated. It is certain ruin; it will be construed into flight, and every hour’s delay will strengthen the queen and discourage our adherents. Our only chance is in an instantaneous attack, before Huntley, Ogilvy, and the northern men, have joined the royal force.” Pretending, however, to deliberate upon the offers of negotiation, he gained a brief respite: this he used to publish a proclamation, in which he declared his determination to support the king’s government; and sending information to the Merse, Lothian, and Stirlingshire, was rapidly joined by a considerable body of his friends. Morton, Glencairn, Lennox, and Semple, lost no time, but marshalled their strength and advanced by forced marches to Glasgow:¹ Mar despatched reinforcements and cannon from Stirling; Grange, whose veteran experience in military affairs was of infinite value at such a moment, took the command of the horse; and Moray had the good sense to intrust to him the general arrangements for the approaching battle. Hume, also a skilful soldier, not only foiled Hepburn of Riccarton in his attempt to seize Dunbar for the queen,² but kept the Merse men from declaring for her, and soon joined the regent with six hundred men, whilst Edinburgh beat up for recruits and sent a small force of hagbutter. The effects which so invariably follow decision and confidence were soon apparent, and in ten days Moray commanded an army of four thousand men.³

¹ Drury to Cecil, May 7, 1568. Keith, p. 474. MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, Berwick, May 10, 1568. Proclamation of the King of Scots, May 7, 1568, broadside, State-paper Office; printed by Lekprevik. Also, *ibid.* MS. Proclamation of the regent for the gathering of the country, May 3, 1568.

² Drury to Cecil, May 6, 1568. Keith, p. 474.

³ MS. State-paper Office, Advertisements of the Conflict in Scotland, May 16, 1568.

Amid these preparations Mary sent her servant, John Beaton, to England and the French court, soliciting support. In return, the English queen resolved to despatch Dr Leighton into Scotland with her warm congratulations, and an assurance, that if her sister would submit the decision of her affairs to his royal mistress, and abstain from calling in any foreign aid, she would speedily either persuade or compel her subjects to acknowledge her authority.¹ It happened, too, that shortly previous to her escape, Monsieur de Beaumont, an ambassador from Henry, had arrived from France to solicit, as he affirmed, an interview with the captive princess, which had been positively refused. Some suspected that he came to urge the expediency of a divorce from Bothwell, and a marriage between Mary and the Lord of Arbroath, second son of the Duke of Chastelherault. Others affirmed that, like De Lignerolles, his secret instructions were more favourable to the regent than the queen; but, however this may be, he now resorted to the camp at Hamilton, and apparently exerted himself to procure a reconciliation between the two factions.²

We have already seen, that this was agreeable to Mary's own wishes. Her inclination from the first had been to avoid a battle, to retire to Dunbarton, a fortress which had been all along kept for her by Lord Fleming, and to regain by degrees her influence over her nobility and her people. In this wise and humane policy she was opposed by the ambition and fierce impatience of the Hamiltons, who, seeing themselves the strongest party, deemed the moment favourable to

¹ MS. State-paper Office, wholly in Cecil's hand, "Instructions for Mr Thomas Leighton, sent into Scotland."

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Forster to Cecil, Alnwick, April 30, 1568. Also, MS. State-paper Office, Advertisements of the Conflict in Scotland, Keith, p. 478.

crush Moray for ever, and to obtain an ascendancy over the queen and the government.¹

So far, however, Mary's influence prevailed, that they consented to march from Hamilton to Dunbarton; and Moray, congratulating himself upon their resolution, immediately drew out his little army on the Burgh-muir of Glasgow, resolved to watch their movements, and, if possible, bring them to an engagement. For this purpose Grange had previously examined the ground; and the moment he became aware that the queen's army kept the south side of the river, the regent's camp being on the opposite bank, he mounted a hagbutter behind each of his horsemen, rapidly forded the Clyde, and placed them at the village of Langside, amongst some cottages, hedges, and little yards or gardens which skirted each side of a narrow lane, through which the queen's troops must defile.²

Whilst this manoeuvre was successfully performing, Moray, who led the main battle, and Morton, who commanded the vanguard or advance, crossed the river by a neighbouring bridge and drew up their men; a movement which was scarcely completed when the queen's vanguard, two thousand strong, and commanded by Lord Claud Hamilton, attempting to carry the lane, was received by a close and deadly fire from the hagbutterers in the hedges and cottage gardens. This killed many, drove them back, and threw their ranks into confusion; but, confident in their numbers, they pressed forward up the steep of the hill, so that the men were already exhausted when they suddenly found themselves encountered by Moray's advance, which was well breathed, and in

¹ *Memoirs of James the Sext*, p. 25. *Melvil's Memoirs*, p. 200.

² *Melvil's Memoirs*, pp. 200, 201.

firm order. It was composed of the flower of the border pikemen. Morton, who led it, with Hume, Ker of Cessford, and the barons of the Merse, all fought on foot; and when the first charge took place, Grange's clear voice was heard above the din of battle, calling to them to keep their pikes shouldered till the enemy had levelled theirs, and then to push on.¹ They obeyed him, and a severe conflict took place. It was here only that there was hard fighting; and Sir James Melvil, who was present, describes the long pikes as so closely crossed and interlaced, that, when the soldiers behind discharged their pistols, and threw them or the staves of their shattered weapons in the faces of their enemies, they never reached the ground, but remained lying on the spears.²

For some time the conflict was doubtful, till Grange, perceiving the right wing of the regent's advance (consisting of the Renfrewshire barons) beginning to give way, galloped to the main battle, and brought Lindsay, Lochleven, Sir James Balfour, and their followers, to reinforce the weak point. This they did effectually; and their attack was so furious, that it broke the queen's ranks and threw all into confusion. Moray, who had hitherto stood on the defensive, contenting himself with repulsing the enemy's cavalry, which was far superior in numbers and equipment to his own, now seized the moment to charge with the main battle, and the flight became universal.³ At this instant, too, the chief of the Macfarlanes, and two hundred of his highlanders, broke in upon the scattered fragments of the army with the leaps and

¹ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 201. MS. State-paper Office, Advertisements of the Conflict in Scotland, May 16, 1568.

² Melvil's Memoirs, p. 201.

³ Ibid. Also, Historie of James the Sext, p. 26. Also, Calderwood's Account in Keith, p. 480.

yells peculiar to their mode of fighting,¹ and the pursuit would have been sanguinary, but for the generous exertions of the regent, who called out to save the fugitives, and employed his cavalry, with Grange who commanded them, not as instruments of slaughter but of mercy. This decisive battle lasted only three quarters of an hour. On the queen's side there were but three hundred slain; some accounts say only half that number.² On the regent's only a single soldier fell. Ten pieces of brass cannon were taken, and many prisoners of note. Amongst the rest, the Lords Seton and Ross; the masters, or eldest sons of the Earls of Eglinton and Cassillis; the Sheriff of Ayr; the Sheriff of Linlithgow, a Hamilton, who bore their standard in the vanguard; the Lairds of Preston, Innerwick, Pitmilly, Balwearie, Boyne, and Trabrown; Robert Melvil and Andrew Melvil; two sons of the Bishop of St Andrews, and a son of the Abbot of Kilwinning. It was reported that Argyle was made prisoner, but purposely suffered to escape. On the regent's side, Hume, Ochiltree, and Andrew Car of Faudonside, were severely wounded.³ Previous to the conflict, Mary had taken her station upon an eminence half a mile distant, which commanded a view of the field. She was surrounded by a small suite, and watched the vicissitudes of the fight with breathless eagerness and hope. At last, when the charge of Moray took place, witnessing the total dispersion of her army, she fled in great terror and at full speed in the direction of Dumfries; nor did she venture to

¹ MS. State-paper Office, May 16, 1568. Advertisements of the Conflict in Scotland.

² MS. original, State-paper Office, Advertisements of the Conflict in Scotland, May 16, 1568. Also, Melvil's Memoirs, p. 202.

³ MS. State-paper Office, Advertisements of the Conflict in Scotland, 16th May, 1568.

draw bridle till she found herself in the abbey of Dundrennan, sixty miles from the field.¹

On arriving at this place, which was on the confines of England, the queen declared her intention of retreating into that country, and throwing herself upon the protection of Elizabeth. It was a hasty and fatal resolution, adopted against the advice of those faithful servants who had followed her in her flight, and must have been dictated more by the terror of her own subjects, than by any well-grounded confidence in the character of Elizabeth. Lord Herries, who accompanied her, had taken the precaution of writing to Lowther, the deputy-governor of Carlisle, desiring to know whether his royal mistress might come safely to that city; but such was her impatience, that before any answer could be returned, she had taken a boat and passed over in her riding dress, and soiled with travel, to Workington,² in Cumberland. Here she was recognised by the gentlemen of the country, who conveyed her to Cockermouth, from which Lowther conducted her with all respect and honour to Carlisle.³ Amongst her attendants were the Lords Herries, Fleming, and Livingston.

While still at Workington, the Queen of Scots had written to Elizabeth, describing the wrongs she had endured from her rebellious subjects, alluding to the recent defeat at Langside, and expressing her confident hope that the queen would protect and assist her against her enemies. She concluded with these pathetic words: "It is my earnest request that your

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Advertisements of the Conflict in Scotland, 16th May, 1568.

² A little to the north of Whitehaven.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office. Papers of Mary queen of Scots. Lowther to Cecil, 17th May, 1568. Also, MS. State-paper Office, Advertisements out of Scotland, 18th May, 1568.

majesty will send for me as soon as possible, for my condition is pitiable, not to say for a queen, but even for a simple gentlewoman. I have no other dress than that in which I escaped from the field; my first day's ride was sixty miles across the country, and I have not since dared to travel except by night."¹

On receiving this letter, Elizabeth felt that Mary was at last in her power, and she did not hesitate to avail herself of the fatal error which had been committed. Her first orders to the sheriffs, on the 19th of May, sufficiently show this. She commanded them to treat the Scottish queen and her suite with honour and respect, but to keep a strict watch, and prevent all escape.² At the same time, Lady Scrope, sister to the Duke of Norfolk, was sent to wait upon her, and Sir Francis Knollys arrived with letters of condolence.³ But impatient under these formalities, and anxious for a personal interview, Mary addressed a second letter to Elizabeth, in which she entreated, that as her affairs were urgent, she might be permitted instantly to see the queen, to vindicate herself from the false aspersions which had been cast upon her by her ungrateful subjects, and to dispel the doubts which she understood were entertained. She had sent up Lord Herries, she said, to communicate with her sister, and Lord Fleming to carry a message to France; but she entreated, if any resolution had been formed against assisting her, (a decision which must surely come from others, not from Elizabeth's own heart,) leave might be given her as freely to

¹ Anderson, vol. iv. pp. 29, 33. The original letter is in French, Caligula, C. i. fol. 68.

² Copy, State-paper Office, by the Queen to the Sheriffs, Justices of Peace, &c. of Cumberland.

³ Anderson, vol. iv. part i. pp. 52, 53. Lord Scrope and Knollys to the Queen, Carlisle, 29th May, 1568.

depart from her dominions as she had freely entered them. Nothing could so much injure her cause as delay; and already had she been detained in the state of a prisoner for fifteen days, a proceeding which, to speak frankly, she found somewhat hard and strange. In conclusion, she reminded Elizabeth of some circumstances connected with the ring which she now sent her. It bore the emblem of a heart, and had probably been a gift of the English queen. "Remember," said she, "I have kept my promise. I have sent you my heart in the ring, and now I have brought to you both heart and body, to knit more firmly the tie that binds us together."¹

The offer in this letter to vindicate herself in person before Elizabeth, was earnestly pressed by Mary in her first interview with Scrope and Knollys. Her engaging manner, and the spirit and eloquence with which she defended herself, made a deep impression on both. She openly declared, that Morton and Lethington were cognizant of the king her husband's murder; and Knollys confessed, that although he began by accusing her of that dreadful crime, the sight of her tears soon transformed him into a comforter.²

Meanwhile, Moray lost no time in following up the advantage which he had gained; and after the retreat of the queen, having made an expedition northward, at the head of a large force, and for the moment put down opposition, he returned to the capital, to let loose the vengeance of the laws against those who had resisted his government. Notwithstanding the accusations of his enemies, no instance of cruelty or revenge

¹ Anderson, vol. iv. part i. pp. 48, 49, 50. *Historie of James the Sext*, pp. 27, 28.

² *Id.* Anderson, vol. iv. pp. 58, 59, Knollys to Elizabeth, Carlisle, 30th May, 1568.

can be proved against him : whether it was that his nature was really an enemy to blood, or that he found fines and forfeitures a more effectual way of destroying his opponents and enriching his friends.¹ These occupations at home, however, did not prevent his cares for his safety on the side of England. As soon as he heard of Mary's retreat to Carlisle, and her offer to vindicate herself before Elizabeth, he sent up his secretary, or confidential servant, Wood, to express his readiness instantly to appear in person with the Earl of Morton, to answer any charges brought against him ; to produce evidence to justify his conduct and that of his companions, and, as Drury expresses it, to enter himself prisoner in the Tower of London, if he did not prove her guilty in the death of the king her husband.²

This proposal of both parties to vindicate themselves before the queen of England, and to make her the arbiter of their mutual wrongs, came very opportunely to Elizabeth, as she was at that moment engaged with her council in a deliberation on the proper course to be pursued, in consequence of the flight of the Scottish queen. Knollys had already warned her of the impression made upon the Roman Catholics in the north by her arrival, and had urged the necessity either of granting her assistance, or, if that was held too much, restoring her to liberty. Rumours and speeches, so he wrote, were already blown about the country, exposing, in strong language, the ungratefulness of her detention ; and indeed so manifest a wrong was committed by her imprisonment, it involved so flagrant a breach of the common principles of law and justice,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, May 26, 1568.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, May 22, 1568. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, June 17, 1568.

that Knollys, an honourable nobleman, felt impatient that he should be made a "jailor," so he expressed it, in such a cause.¹

Of all this, Elizabeth and her ministers were well aware; but in that unscrupulous and accommodating school of politics for which the times were conspicuous, when principle and expediency were found at variance, there was seldom much hesitation which should give way; and it was resolved that, in this instance, honour and justice should be sacrificed to necessity. And here, although I must strongly condemn the conduct of the English queen, it is impossible not to see the difficulties by which she was surrounded: the party which it was her interest to support, was that of Moray and the Protestants; she looked with dread on France, and the resumption of French influence in Scotland; within her own realm, the Roman Catholics were unquiet and discontented, and in Ireland constantly on the eve of rebellion—if such a word can be used to the resistance of a system too grinding to be tamely borne. All these impatient spirits looked to Mary as a point of union and strength. Had she been broken by her late reverses, had she manifested a sense of the imprudence by which she had been lately guided, or evinced any desire to reform her conduct, or forgive her subjects who had risen against the murderer of her husband more than against herself, the queen might have been inclined to a more favourable course. But the very contrary was the case: her first step after her escape had been to resume her correspondence with Bothwell;² his creatures, Hepburn of Riccarton, and the two

¹ Knollys to Cecil, Carlisle, 2d June, 1568. Anderson, vol. iv. part i. p. 61.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, Berwick, 26th May, 1568. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Mr John Willok to Cecil, Edinburgh, 31st May, 1568.

Ormistons, blotted as accomplices in his crime, had frequent access to her. In her conversations with Knollys and Scrope, she could not repress her anticipations of victory and purposes of vengeance, if once again a free princess. She declared, that rather than have peace with Moray, she would submit to any extremity, and call help from Turkey before she gave up the contest; and she lamented bitterly that the delays of Elizabeth imboldened the traitors who had risen against her.¹ Was the Queen of England at such a crisis, and having such a rival in her power, to dismiss her at her first request, and permit her to overwhelm her friends and allies, to re-establish the Roman Catholic party, and possibly the Roman Catholic religion in Scotland? After such conduct, could it be deemed either unlooked-for, or extraordinary, should she fall from the proud position she now held, as the head of the Protestant party in Europe? So argued the far-sighted Cecil, and the queen his mistress followed, or, it is probable, in this instance anticipated, his counsel.

It was determined to detain Mary a prisoner, to refuse her a personal meeting, to support Moray in the regency, and to induce him to make public the proofs which he possessed of the guilt of his sovereign the Queen of Scots.

With this view Elizabeth wrote to the regent, and soon after despatched Mr Middlemore with a message both to him and to the Scottish queen. She informed him in her letter, that he was accused by his sovereign of the highest crimes which a subject could commit against his prince — rebellion, imprisonment of her person, and her expulsion from her dominions by open

¹ Anderson, vol. iv. part i. pp. 71, 791. Knollys to Cecil, 11th June, 1568. Bishop of Durham to Cecil, 27th June, 1568. MS. State-paper Office, B.C.

battle. She admonished him to forbear from all hostility ; and as her royal sister, who would observe the same abstinence, was content to commit to her the hearing and ordering of her cause, she required him to bring forward his defences against the crimes of which he was accused.¹

Before repairing to Moray in Scotland, Middlemore was admitted to an interview with Mary, at Carlisle. He informed her, that his mistress disclaimed all idea of keeping her a prisoner, her present detention at Carlisle having no other object than to save her from her enemies. As to a personal interview that was at present impossible. She was accused of being an accomplice in a foul and horrible crime, the murder of her husband : she had made choice of the Queen of England to be the only judge of her cause ; and care must be taken not to prejudice her defence, and give a handle to her enemies, by admitting her to her presence, before trial had been made of her innocence.

At these words *judge* and *trial*, which escaped Middlemore, Mary's spirit rose, and she at once detected and exposed the artful diplomacy of which she was about to be made the victim. It was God, she exclaimed, who could alone be her judge ; as a queen she was amenable to no human tribunal. Of her own free will, indeed, she had offered to make Elizabeth the confidant of her wrongs, to defend herself against the falsehoods brought against her, and to utter to her such matters as had never yet been disclosed to any living being ; but none could compel her to accuse herself : and as to Moray, and those rebels who had joined him, her sister was partial. She was contented, it appeared, that they should come to her presence to

¹ Elizabeth to Moray, June 8, 1568. Anderson, vol. iv. part i. pp. 68, 69.

arraign her, whilst she, their sovereign, was debarred from that indulgence in making her defence. "Who ever heard that subjects and traitors should be permitted to plead against their prince? And yet," said she, "if they must needs come, bid the queen my sister call up Morton and Lethington, who are said to know most against me — confront me with them — let me hear their accusations, and then listen to my reply. But," she added significantly, "I suspect that Lethington would be loath of such an errand."¹

It had been Mary's idea, from some expressions used by Scrope and Knollys in their first interview,² that the English queen would be induced to restore her without inquiry, or at least by an inquiry so regulated as to criminate her subjects, without permitting them to reply; but the mission of Middlemore dispelled this notion. She found that not only was she to be refused an interview with the English queen, but that Moray had been already called upon to repair to England, and to justify his conduct by bringing forward his proofs against his sovereign. Against this she loudly protested, and at once declared, that she would endure imprisonment, and even death, sooner than submit to such indignity.³ Such conduct was, no doubt, completely consonant to her feelings and her rights as a free princess, and may have been quite consistent with her entire guiltlessness of the charges brought against her; but it seems to me, that complete innocence would have embraced even the opportunity of an imperfect defence, rather than endure the atrocious aspersions with which she was now loaded.

¹ Anderson, vol. iv. part i. p. 90. Middlemore to Cecil, June 14, 1568.

² Anderson, vol. iv. part i. p. 55. Scrope and Knollys to Elizabeth, 29th May, 1568.

³ Mary to Elizabeth, 13th June, 1568. Anderson, vol. iv. p. 97, part i.

Moray, in the meantime, acted with his accustomed calmness and decision. Having received Middlemore's message at Dumfries, hostilities against Mary's partisans were suspended at the request of the English queen, and he professed his readiness to repair to England in person, accompanied by Morton, rather than that the truth should not be fully investigated;¹ but previous to this, there was one point upon which he desired to be satisfied. It was evident, he said, that in a cause involving such grave results, nothing could be more ruinous for him than to accuse the queen, the mother of his sovereign, and afterwards, as he expressed it, "to enter into qualification with her."² Again, if the accusation should proceed, and he was able to prove his allegations, he was solicitous to know what was likely to follow. As to such letters of the Queen of Scots as were in his possession, he had already sent translations of them by his servant Wood; and he would gladly understand whether, in the event of the originals agreeing with these translations, their contents would be judged sufficient to establish her accession to the murder.³

This preliminary inquiry, so artful in its object, for it is evident it enabled the regent to arrange or amend his proofs according to the instructions which he might receive from England, was intrusted to Middlemore, who, on his return to the English court, reported it to Elizabeth, and at the same time informed her of Mary's resolution to decline the intended investigation. Cecil's answer was framed with the evident view of being communicated by Lord Herries, who was then at the

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, 17th June, 1568.

² MS. State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, with enclosure, 22d June, 1568.

³ Goodal, vol. ii. p. 75, Moray's answer to Middlemore, 22d June, 1568.

English court, to his sovereign. It informed the regent that Elizabeth neither meant to promote any accusation of the Scottish queen, nor to proceed to any condemnation; that her single purpose was to settle all disputes, to allow of no faults in her sister, to bring the controversy to a happy conclusion with surety to all parties, and to esteem no proof sufficient till both parties were heard.¹

Such a declaration must have startled Moray; and had he believed it, it is evident, from the cautious tone of his previous inquiries, that no accusation of the Queen of Scots was to be looked for from him. But Elizabeth at this moment exerted all the powers of that state craft in which she was so great an adept, to blind both Moray and Mary. It was her object to persuade the regent, that whatever might be her assurances to Mary, she really intended to try the cause, and if he could prove her guilty, to keep her where she was, in prison: it was her purpose, on the other hand, to convince Mary that she would never permit Moray to bring forward any accusation, but quashing all odious criminations, promote a reconciliation with her subjects, and restore her to her dignity. The negotiations were conducted on the part of the Scottish queen by Lord Herries, who was then at the English court; and by Cecil's directions, such only of this nobleman's proposals as it was deemed expedient Moray should know, were communicated to the regent,² whilst from Mary we may believe the same concealment was made of Moray's entire messages.

These artful transactions occupied nearly a month,

¹ Goodal, vol. ii. p. 89. Answer by Cecil to the Earl of Moray's proposals, 31st June, 1568.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, June 22, 1568, with enclosure.

and were interrupted, not only by the suspicions and delays of both parties, but by the state of Scotland. In that country Moray's unpopularity was now excessive, whilst the queen's friends were daily rising into confidence and strength. The severity of the regent, and the terrors of an approaching parliament, in which the dismal scenes of forfeiture and confiscation were expected to be renewed, had so estranged his supporters and united his enemies, that he began to be alarmed, not only for his government, but for his life. A conspiracy for his assassination was discovered, at the head of which were the comptroller Murray of Tullibardine and his brother, the same persons who had acted so bold a part in arraigning Bothwell.¹ The regent was taunted, and not unjustly, with his former activity in prosecuting the king's murderers, and his present lukewarmness; and people pointed ironically to his associate, Sir James Balfour, a man universally detested, by his own confession one of the murderers, and now employed by Moray in the most confidential affairs of the government.²

To such a height had these discontents arisen, that Argyle, Huntley, and the Hamiltons, uniting their strength in favour of the queen, held a convention at Largs, (July 28th,) in which they resolved to let loose the borderers upon England, and wrote to the Duke of Alva, requesting his assistance in the most earnest terms.³ Notwithstanding the delays produced by this miserable state of things, Mary and the regent at last agreed to have their disputes settled by the English

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. July 20, 1568, Drury to Cecil. Also, *ibid.* same to same, July 31, 1568. Also, *ibid.* same to same, 3d August, 1568.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, July 10, 1568.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to Cecil, 3d August, 1568. MS. State-paper Office, Lords of Scotland to Duke of Alva.

queen; and Lord Herries, having arrived at Bolton castle, to which place the Scottish queen had been removed, informed his mistress, in the presence of Scrope and Knollys, of Elizabeth's proposals, and received her formal acquiescence. As some controversy has arisen upon this point, it is right to give his very words. He told Mary that Elizabeth had commanded him to say unto her, "That if she would commit her cause to be heard by her highness's order, but not to make her highness judge over her, but rather as to her dear cousin and friend, to commit herself to her advice and counsel; that if she would thus do, her highness would surely set her again in her seat of regiment, and dignity regal, in this form and order:—first, her highness would send for the noblemen of Scotland that be her adversaries, to ask account of them, before such noblemen as this queen herself should like of, to know their answer, why they have deposed their queen and sovereign from her regiment; and that if, in their answers, they could allege some reason for them in their so doing, (which her highness thinks they cannot do,) that her highness would set this queen in her seat regal *conditionally*, that those her lords and subjects should continue in their honours, estates, and dignities to them appertaining. But if they should not be able to allege any reason of their doings, that then her highness would *absolutely* set her in her seat regal, and that by force of hostility, if they should resist." To this promise, which is quite clear and explicit, Elizabeth annexed as conditions, that Mary should renounce all claim to the crown of England, during the life of the queen, or her issue; that she should forsake the league with France, and, abandoning the mass, receive the Common Prayer after the form of England.¹ This

¹ Anderson, vol. iv. part i. pp. 109, 110.

last stipulation was added with a view of encouraging some symptoms of a disposition to be converted to the Church of England, which had recently appeared in Mary, who had received an English chaplain, and "had grown to a good liking of the Common Prayer."¹

These proposals the Queen of Scots embraced after some hesitation, and commissioners would have been immediately appointed for the trial of this great cause, but for the melancholy state of Scotland. In this country, Huntley and Argyle kept the field at the head of a large force ; and, having completely reduced under the queen's power the northern and western parts of the kingdom, were rapidly advancing to the south. Their object was to crush Moray before he could hold the parliament, in which they expected the vengeance of the laws to be let loose against themselves ; but their march was arrested by letters from their sovereign, who commanded her friends to desist from hostilities, informing them that Elizabeth would compel the regent to the same course.² This order, on Mary's side, was obeyed ; on Moray's, if indeed ever sent by the English queen, it was openly violated ; for scarce were his rivals dispersed, than the parliament met, (18th August,) and, had it not been for the remonstrances of Lethington, not a baron who had espoused the cause of the queen would have been left unproscribed. As it was, all his efforts could not save the Archbishop of St Andrews, Lord Claud Hamilton, the Bishop of Ross, and many others, who were declared traitors, and forfeited.³ It was in vain that the lords of Mary's party complained of this cruel and unjust conduct, and prepared for revenge. Moray, forgetful of his promises, anticipated their attack, hastily levied a force, overran

¹ Knollys to Cecil, 28th July. Anderson, vol. iv. part i. p. 113.

² Anderson, vol. iv. part i. pp. 125, 126. ³ Ibid.

Annandale and Galloway, and would have reduced all opposition by fire and sword, had not his progress been interrupted by a peremptory message from Elizabeth, who commanded him instantly to lay down his arms, and send commissioners to York to answer for his conduct to his sovereign. If this was delayed or resisted, she declared her resolution instantly to set Mary at liberty, and assist her against her enemies; adding, that his refusal would convince her of his mistress's innocence and his own guilt.¹

This mandate Moray did not dare to disobey, whatever may have been his wishes and regrets. He distrusted Elizabeth; he dreaded increasing his unpopularity with the nobles, by openly bringing forward so odious an accusation against his sovereign; he saw that success was doubtful, failure absolute ruin; and when he proposed to select commissioners, all shrunk from so invidious an office. But he had advanced too far to retract; and digesting as he best could the mortification of being arrested in the course of his victories, he determined to appear personally at York, and appointed four commissioners to accompany him. These were the Earl of Morton, the Bishop of Orkney, Lord Lindsay, and the Commendator of Dunfermline. To them he added some assistants, the most noted of whom were Lethington the secretary, whom he had begun to suspect of a leaning to the queen's cause, and dreaded to leave behind him, the celebrated Buchanan, and Mr James Makgill. Elizabeth now directed the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Sussex, and Sir Ralph Sadler, to appear upon her part; and nothing remained but for Mary to appoint her commissioners.²

Previous to this, she desired to have a consultation

¹ Camden, apud Kennet, vol. ii. p. 412.

² Goodal, vol. ii. p. 109.

with Lesley the bishop of Ross; and, on his repair to Bolton, this able and attached servant expressed his sorrow that she had agreed to any conference wherein her subjects should be accused, as Moray and his friends, he said, would undoubtedly utter all they could for their defence, although it were to her dishonour and that of the whole realm; it was vain, he added, to expect that they would openly acknowledge themselves to be ill subjects, and she a good princess; and it would, in his opinion, be far better to endeavour to bring about an amicable arrangement, without any accusation on either side. To this, Mary's answer, as reported by Lesley himself, was remarkable. She declared there was no such danger to be apprehended as he supposed, since the judges would be favourable to her, and she was already assured of the good will of the Duke of Norfolk, who had sent her a message to Bolton, expressive of his attachment to her interests.¹

At this moment, Robert Melvil arrived at Bolton with important despatches from Lethington to Mary. He stated that Moray was determined to utter every thing he could against her, and had carried with him to York the "letters which he had to produce in proof of the murder;" he sent her, by the same messenger, copies of these letters which he had clandestinely procured; he assured her, that nothing but a desire to do her service had induced him to come into England, and begged her to send word by Melvil to York, what she thought it best for him to do. Mary, after having carefully examined these letters, which were only the translations from the original French into the Scottish language, sent her answer to Lethington. It is worthy of note, that it contained no assertion as to the forgery

¹ Examination of the Bishop of Ross at the Tower. Murdin, p. 52.

or interpolation of these letters, now, as it appears, communicated to her for the first time. It simply requested him to use his efforts to stay the rigorous accusations of Moray, to labour with the Duke of Norfolk in her favour, and to give full credit to the Bishop of Ross.¹

Having concluded her consultation with Lesley and Melvil, she chose her commissioners. They were the Bishop of Ross, Lords Herries, Boyd, and Livingston, the Abbot of Kilwinning, Sir John Gordon of Lochinvar, and Sir James Cockburn of Skirling.² These persons having received their instructions, proceeded to York, where they met the regent, the Duke of Norfolk, and the rest of the judges.

So far Elizabeth had been successful, and the position in which she had placed herself was certainly most solemn and imposing. Before her pleaded the Queen of Scots, so late her rival and her opponent, now her prisoner awaiting her award, and acknowledging, that if restored to her dignity, she would owe all to her interference. On the other hand, stood the regent, the representative of the majesty of his sovereign, and the governor of a kingdom, but now receiving the law from her lips whose superior power he did not dare to resist. To hear the cause were assembled the noblest and the wisest in both countries; and besides this, the misfortunes of Mary had created so great and universal a sensation, that it is no exaggeration when we say, the eyes not only of England and Scotland, but of Europe, were fixed upon the conferences now opening at York.

The commissioners, accordingly, having assembled, the proceedings began; but, on the very threshold, a

¹ Murdin, pp. 52, 53.

² Goodal, vol. ii. p. 109.

sharp dispute arose when Norfolk observed, that the regent, having consented to plead before Elizabeth, must first do homage to the English crown. The proposition was received as an insult; and Moray, red with anger, was hesitating how to answer it, when the cooler Lethington took up the word, and sarcastically remarked, that when the Scottish monarchs received back again the counties of Northumberland and Cumberland, with the manor of Huntingdon, it would be time to talk of homage; but, as to the crown and kingdom of Scotland, both were more free than their own England had recently been, when she paid Peter's pence to Rome.¹ The mention of the point, however, rendered some notice of it necessary, and after the oaths had been administered, mutual protestations were taken.² The commissioners of the Scottish queen then gave in their complaint. It stated, in clear and energetic language, the history of the rebellion against Mary, her deposition and imprisonment, the usurpation of the regency by Moray, her escape, defeat, and flight into England, and her confident hope that, by the mediation of Elizabeth, she might be restored to the peaceable enjoyment of her kingdom.³

All now looked with eagerness for Moray's reply, confidently expecting that he would bring forward, as his defence, the accusation of his sovereign, and the promised proofs of her accession to the murder of the king; but, to the surprise and disappointment of Elizabeth, he was seized with a repetition of his former fears; and, instead of proceeding to any accusation, requested a preliminary conference with the

¹ Melvil's *Memoirs*, p. 206. Lesley's *Negotiations*, Anderson, vol. iii. p. 15. Also, Norfolk to Cecil, Oct. 9, 1568. Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. p. 42.

² Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. pp. 49, 50.

³ Goodal, vol. ii. pp. 123, 126.

English commissioners. Being admitted to it, he desired to know whether they would grant him an assurance that their mistress would pronounce the Queen of Scots guilty or not guilty, according to the proofs which he laid before them; and, in the event of the conviction of the murder, whether the Queen of England would sanction his proceedings, maintain the government of the king, and support him in his office of regent.¹ These questions being remitted by the commissioners to Elizabeth, he gave in his defence, which produced new astonishment. It rested solely on Mary's marriage with Bothwell, and detailed the shameful circumstances by which it was accompanied, with the necessity of rising in arms to defend the prince, and of subjecting the queen to a temporary imprisonment, during which she voluntarily resigned the crown. It added not a syllable, directly or indirectly, accusing Mary of being an accomplice in the murder, and did not even contain a hint or an allusion, from which it could be gathered that the regent ever entertained such a suspicion, (October 10th.)²

It was difficult to account for this sudden and unexpected moderation upon the part of Moray. A few weeks only had elapsed since he had been loud in his accusations, and testified the utmost eagerness to bring forward his proofs. He was now silent on the subject; his defence was general, almost to feebleness; and when, after a few days' interval, it was replied to by Mary's commissioners, who urged, forcibly and triumphantly, the coalition between Bothwell and the lords, his trial and acquittal, and their subsequent recommendation of him as a husband to the queen, he sat down apparently

¹ Goodal, vol. ii. pp. 130, 131. Oct. 9, pp. 126, 127.

² Ibid. vol. ii. pp. 139, 144; and *Dépêches de la Motte Fenelon*, published by Mr P. Cooper, vol. i. pp. 17, 18, a very valuable work.

dispirited and confuted, and declined saying another word upon the subject.

A secret intrigue, of which we have already had some slight intimation from Mary's conversation with the Bishop of Ross, furnishes us with a key to all this mystery. It originated in the ambition of the Duke of Norfolk, a nobleman then, perhaps, the most powerful subject in England, and who had long been a favourer of Mary's title to the crown. There seems, too, to be little doubt, that for some time Norfolk had entertained the idea of a marriage with the Scottish queen, and that he deprecated the present proceedings against her in the strongest manner, although he dared not refuse the task imposed upon him by Elizabeth. These feelings, which he had secretly imparted to the Scottish queen through his sister, Lady Scrope, who waited on her, she had, as we have seen, communicated to Lethington and the Bishop of Ross; and Lethington, on his arrival at York, procured a secret interview with Norfolk.¹

On this occasion the duke expressed his astonishment that he and Moray should so far forget their honour as to accuse their sovereign before Elizabeth; as if they thought that England was entitled to be a judge or a superior over the kingdom of Scotland. Lethington warmly deprecated the idea, blamed the weakness of the regent, whose own feelings were against the accusation; declared for his own part, that he was there, as Moray well knew, rather as the friend than the enemy of his sovereign, and professed his readiness to exert every effort to quash the accusation.² Norfolk then asked, whether he thought in this matter Moray could be trusted; and the secretary affirming

¹ Examination of the Bishop of Ross. Murdin, p. 53.

² Melvil's Memoirs, p. 206.

that he might, the Duke took the regent aside and remonstrated with him on the folly and impolicy of his present conduct. The English queen, his mistress, he said, was resolved during her life to evade the question of the succession, careless what blood might be shed, or what confusion might arise upon the point; as to the true title, none doubted that it lay in the Queen of Scots and her son, and much he marvelled that the regent, whom he had always reputed a wise and honourable man, should come hither to blacken his mistress, and, as far as he could, destroy the prospect of her and her son's succession.¹ "Besides," added he, "you are grievously deceived if you imagine the Queen of England will ever pronounce sentence in this cause. We are sent here, no doubt, as commissioners, but we are debarred from coming to a decision, and Elizabeth has fully resolved to arrive at none herself. Do you not see that no answers have been returned to the questions which upon this point were addressed by you to us, and forwarded to the queen? Nay, you can easily put the matter to a more certain proof: request an assurance, under the queen's hand, that when you accuse your sovereign and bring forward your proofs, she will pronounce sentence. If you get it, act as you please; if it is not given, rest assured my information is correct, and all that will come of your accusation will be repentance for your own folly."²

This conversation made a deep impression on Moray, already sufficiently alive to the dangerous part he was playing: and when he imparted it in confidence to

¹ Melvil's *Memoirs*, pp. 206, 207.

² *Ibid.* pp. 207, 208, 4th edition, Melvil's authority here is unquestionable, as he was not only present at York, but the regent made him privy to this secret interview. Also, *Dépêches de la Motte Fenelon*, vol. i. p. 17.

Lethington and Sir James Melvil, both of them strongly confirmed him in the views stated by Norfolk.¹ From his brother commissioners, Morton and Makgill, and his secretary, Wood, who had drawn up the proofs against the Scottish queen, the regent carefully concealed what had happened; but he determined to follow Norfolk's advice, and bring forward no public accusation till he was assured of the course to be followed by Elizabeth. Such is the secret history of Moray's sudden change, and the present moderation of his conduct towards the queen his sovereign.

But whilst a regard for his own interest prevented him from assuming the character of a public accuser, the regent *privately* exhibited to Norfolk, Sussex, and Sadler, the alleged proofs of Mary's guilt, consisting of various bonds or contracts, and other papers, besides some letters and love sonnets addressed by her to Bothwell, with a contract of marriage in the handwriting of the Earl of Huntley. These letters had been found, as the Scottish commissioners affirmed, in a little silver casket or coffer; it had been given by the queen to Bothwell, and was afterwards with its contents seized by Morton; and they offered to swear that the letters were written in Mary's own hand. Having carefully inspected them, and drawn up a summary of their contents, Norfolk transmitted it in a letter to Elizabeth, requesting her judgment whether she considered them sufficient to convict the queen of the murder of her husband. He added, at the same time, his own opinion and that of his brother commissioners, that the proof was conclusive against her, if the letters were really written with her own hand.²

¹ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 208.

² The Commissioners to Elizabeth, 11th October, 1568. Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. pp. 58, 63.

This, however, was confidential, and unknown to the world; so that if matters had terminated here the result of the inquiry must have been considered highly favourable to Mary. She had triumphantly confuted Moray; and, after his boastful speeches, he had shrunk from any open accusation. But Elizabeth was not to be so easily defeated. She had resolved that Moray should publicly accuse his sovereign of the murder; she was convinced that such an event would be of the greatest service to England whether the Scottish queen was to be restored to her dignity or detained a prisoner; and with this view she suddenly removed the conferences to Westminster, affirming that York was too distant to allow of a speedy settlement of the controversy, and taking particular care that neither Mary nor her commissioners should suspect any sinister intention upon her part.¹ How artfully this was managed appears by the original draft of the English queen's letter, still preserved, and partly in Cecil's handwriting. In it Norfolk and his companions were instructed to be especially careful that the Queen of Scots' commissioners should gather no suspicion of the ill success of her cause, but imagine that this new measure was solely intended to accelerate their mistress's restoration to her dignity on safe and honourable terms, both for herself and her subjects.²

It happened that at this moment Moray had made a secret overture to Mary, which rendered this queen less likely to dread any disadvantage to her cause from the removal of the conferences to London. He had sent Robert Melvil to Bolton to propose a scheme, by which all necessity for accusing his sovereign should

¹ La Motte Fenelon, vol. iv. p. 18.

² Original draft, State-paper Office, papers of Mary queen of Scots, October 16, 1568, Elizabeth to her Commissioners.

be removed, and an amicable compromise take place. The Scottish queen was to ratify her demission of the crown, which had been made in Lochleven, the regent was to be confirmed in his government, and Mary was to tarry in England, under the protection of Elizabeth, and with a revenue suitable to her royal dignity. On these conditions Moray was contented to be silent; and although at first the captive princess professed much unwillingness to agree to such terms, she was at length convinced, by the arguments of Melvil, that such a settlement of the controversy was the best for her interest and honour. She therefore despatched Melvil to carry her consent to Moray;¹ she wrote to the English queen, expressing her entire satisfaction that her cause and her honour were now placed in her hands, where she most wished them to be,² and she despatched four of her commissioners, Boyd, Herries, the Bishop of Ross, and the Abbot of Kilwinning, to London.

On their arrival, Elizabeth admitted them to an audience; assured them that she had carefully weighed all that had been done at York; that the enemies of the Queen of Scots appeared to her to have entirely failed in their defence, as far as they had yet pleaded; and that their only course was to acknowledge their offences, return to their allegiance, and intercede for pardon, which she would labour to procure them. For this purpose she had removed the conferences to London, and, to make the settlement more solemn, had joined some other commissioners to those already named. Nothing now remained but to proceed with

¹ MS. declaration of Robert Melvil, Hopetoun MS. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Knollys to Cecil, 25th October, 1568.

² Mary to Elizabeth, 22d October, 1568. Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. p. 95.

the business, first ascertaining whether Moray had any thing further to say in his defence.¹

When the regent repaired along with Lethington and Makgill to London, it was with a determination not to accuse Mary, but to remain true to his agreement to Norfolk; and if any thing should occur to render its execution difficult or impossible, to fall back upon his scheme for Mary's demission of the crown, which he had so lately proposed, and to which she had consented. But an interview with Elizabeth alarmed and perplexed him; he found, to his dismay, that she was perfectly aware of his intrigues with Norfolk. The whole transactions had been betrayed by a confidant of Mary to Morton; he had indignantly revealed it to Cecil, and from him it reached the queen. Nor were his difficulties lessened by a message from Mary herself, who informed him that the Duke of Norfolk had forbid her to resign the crown; and without his consent she could not abide by her agreement.² Nothing could be more embarrassing than his situation. On the one hand, Elizabeth did not conceal her anxiety that he should accuse the Scottish queen and bring forward his proofs of the murder. She had every thing in her power: she already hinted that, in case of his refusal, it might be found necessary to bring forward the Duke of Chastelherault, whose claim to the regency was superior to his own; and it is scarcely matter of wonder that Moray faltered in his resolution. Yet, should he consent to the wishes of the Queen of England, he must bear the disgrace of betraying Norfolk. On the other hand, if he remained true to this nobleman, his fellow commissioners were ready

¹ Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. p. 95. Lesley's negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 25, 26.

² Melvil's declaration. Hopetoun MS.

to arraign him of treachery to them and to the cause of his sovereign. Under these embarrassments he adopted a middle course, and resolved to prepare the accusation, but not to make it public until he had a positive assurance that the Queen of England would pronounce judgment.

Meanwhile, Mary became alarmed at some private intelligence which she received from Hepburn of Riccarton, a follower of Bothwell's, who was now in London, and who assured her, that so far from being favourable, Elizabeth was decidedly hostile to her, and would probably succeed in compelling Moray to desert Norfolk and accuse his sovereign.¹ To meet such an emergency she sent additional instructions to her commissioners, by which their powers were limited to the single act of extending her clemency to her disobedient subjects. She added, that if they found any encouragement given to her adversaries to accuse her, they were instantly to demand her personal admission to the presence of Elizabeth, and if this was refused, to break up the negotiation.²

The conferences were now opened in the chamber called the *Camera depicta*, at Westminster, the commissioners of the Scottish queen having declined to meet in any place where a judicial sentence had been pronounced. They protested against any thing which was now done being interpreted against the rights of their mistress, who, as a free princess, acknowledged no judge or superior on earth; and they required, that as Moray had been admitted to the presence of Elizabeth, and had calumniated his sovereign, the English queen should grant the same privilege to the Queen

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, papers of Mary queen of Scots, Knollys to Cecil, 21st November, 1568.

² Goodal, vol. ii. pp. 185, 186, 187.

of Scots, and listen to her defence from her own lips. To this Elizabeth replied, that it was far from her intention to assume the character of a judge, or in any thing to touch their sovereign's honour; but that to admit her into her presence was impossible till the cause was decided.¹

With this answer they were compelled to be content; and having retired, Moray and his friends were called in, when, being informed that the defences recently made by them at York were considered inconclusive, they were required to say whether they could urge any thing further in their behalf. To encourage them to speak openly, Sir Nicholas Bacon, the lord-keeper, assured the regent, in reply to the demands made at York, that if the Queen of Scots should be proved guilty of the murder of her husband, she should either be delivered into his hands, her life being sufficiently secured, or be kept in England; and he added, that if found guilty, Moray should be continued in the regency, till it was shown that another had a superior right.²

By this declaration Moray was somewhat reassured. He had prepared his accusation; and the paper which contained it was at that moment in the possession of John Wood, his secretary, who sat beside him at the table, and for greater security kept it in his bosom. The regent now rose, and declared how unwilling he and his friends had ever been to touch the honour of their sovereign, or to publish to strangers what might eternally defame her; how readily, had it been possible, they would have secured her reputation and preserved their prince, even at the price of their own exile; and he solemnly protested, that if at last they were com-

¹ Goodal, vol. ii. pp. 188, 189, November 23, 1568.

² Ibid. pp. 201, 202, November 26, 1568.

pelled to pursue a different course, the blame was not to be imputed to them, but rested with their enemies, who constrained them to adopt it in their own defence, and dragged into light the proofs which they had hitherto concealed.¹ Having delivered this protest in writing, Moray prepared to give in his accusation; but before he took this last and fatal step, he required an assurance, under the English queen's hand, that she would pronounce a judgment. To this Cecil replied, "that he had ample assurance already; and it ill became him to suspect or doubt the word of their royal mistress. Where," added he, "is your accusation?"—"It is here," said Wood, plucking it from his bosom; "and here it must remain till we see the queen's handwrit;" but as he spoke the paper was snatched from him by Bothwell the bishop of Orkney, who sprung to the table pursued by Wood, and, amid the ill-suppressed laughter of the English commissioners, laid it before them. The scene, as it is described by Melvil, must have been an extraordinary one. The regent was deeply mortified; and Cecil, smiling triumphantly, enjoyed his confusion: Lord William Howard, a rough seaman, shouted aloud, and commended the activity of Bishop Turpy, a nickname of Orkney; and Lethington, who was the saddest of the company, whispered in Moray's ear, that he had ruined his cause for ever.²

The die, however, was cast; and the charge, which had been so long withheld, was now preferred in the broadest terms. The regent stated, that as Bothwell was the chief executor of the horrible murder of their late sovereign, so he and his friends affirmed that the

¹ Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. pp. 115, 118.

² Melvil's *Memoirs*, pp. 210, 211.

queen his wife had persuaded him to commit it; that she was not only in the foreknowledge of the same, but a maintainer of the assassins, as she had shown by thwarting the course of justice, and by marrying the chief author of that foul crime.¹ To give additional force and solemnity to this proceeding, the Earl of Lennox, father to the murdered king, at this moment presented himself before the commissioners; and having bewailed in pathetic terms the miserable fate of his son, delivered to them a paper, in which he accused Mary in direct terms of conspiring his death.²

When informed of this proceeding, the deputies of this princess expressed the utmost indignation; they declared that nothing could be more false and calumnious than such a statement; that some of those persons who now with shameless ingratitude sought to blacken their sovereign, were themselves deeply implicated in the murder; and they required an immediate audience of Elizabeth.³ When admitted to her presence, they complained in strong terms of the manner in which she had conducted the proceedings. They reminded her how carefully it had been provided, that, in the absence of their royal mistress, nothing should be done which might affect her honour and royal estate: this, they declared, had been directly infringed: she had admitted her subjects into her presence; they had been encouraged to load her with the most atrocious imputations; it was now, therefore, their duty, as custodiers of their mistress's honour, to demand that, in common justice, she should also be heard in person; and to beseech her to arrest the authors of such slanderous practices, till they

¹ Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. p. 119.

² Ibid. p. 122.

³ Goodal, Appendix, vol. ii. pp. 209-213, inclusive.

should answer the charges which should be brought against them.¹

This demand perplexed Elizabeth. It was a just and spirited assertion, on the part of the Scottish commissioners, of their mistress's undoubted right; but the English queen had not the slightest intention of acquiescing in it. She had now gained her first point, Moray having at last publicly arraigned Mary of the murder; but another and greater object remained: she was desirous of getting possession of the proofs of her guilt, of exhibiting them to her council, and either publishing them to the world, or employing them in intimidating her unhappy prisoner into an acceptance of any terms she dictated. Her mode of accomplishing this was artful and politic. It was, no doubt, quite reasonable, she said, addressing the commissioners of the queen, that their mistress should appear to defend herself against so heinous an imputation as the murder of her husband, a crime of which she never had believed her guilty. As for a personal interview, the only reason why she had refused this was, on account of the common slander against her; and now, since the accusation had been publicly made, it would be inconsistent, alike with her honour and that of their mistress, to consent to any compromise or agreement, until the regent and his friends had been called upon to prove their allegations. She, therefore, had resolved to send for them and demand their proofs, after which she would willingly hear their mistress.²

The commissioners remonstrated against the manifest partiality and injustice of such a proceeding: they

¹ Goodal, Appendix, vol. ii. pp. 213-219. La Motte Fenelon, vol. i. pp. 38-51.

² Ibid. p. 221, December 4.

observed, that her majesty must, of course, act as she pleased ; but, for their part, they would never consent that their sovereign's rebellious subjects should be further heard, till she herself were admitted to declare her innocence : and they ended by solemnly protesting, that nothing done hereafter should in any way affect or prejudice her rights.¹ So far, every thing on their part was consistent and agreeable to the indignant feelings of a person unjustly accused ; but their next step is perplexing, and seems not so easily reconcileable with Mary's perfect innocence ; for, on the same day, they made a final proposal for a compromise, by which Moray, notwithstanding his accusation, might still once more be admitted to the favour of his sovereign, and the disputes between her and her subjects be settled.² They added that this scheme seemed to them most consonant to the first intentions of both the queens. It was rejected, however, by Elizabeth : any compromise, she said, would now affect Mary's honour ; better far would it be to summon her accusers, to reprimand and chastise them for the defamation of their sovereign. She would not call for proofs ; but if they persisted in their charge, it would be proper to hear what they could allege in their defence.³

Such a proposal for a compromise would certainly tell strongly against the innocence of the Scottish queen, had it proceeded from herself, after the accusation brought forward by Moray ; but this was not the case. It came from her commissioners alone, and, as they afterwards asserted, without any communication with their mistress. When at last they found it de-

¹ Goodal, vol. ii. p. 223.

² See Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. pp. 135, 137, for the particulars of this last proposal.

³ Ibid. pp. 139, 140.

clined, and perceived that Elizabeth had formed a resolution to hear from Moray the alleged proofs of their sovereign's guilt, before she was suffered to open her lips in her defence, they resolved to be equally peremptory: as soon, therefore, as the regent was summoned before the English commissioners, the Bishop of Ross and his associates demanded admission; and, coming forward, at once dissolved the conference. They declared, that since the Queen of England was determined to receive from the regent the proofs of his injurious allegations against their sovereign, before she was heard in her presence, they were compelled to break off all proceedings; and they delivered a written protest, that nothing done hereafter should prejudice the honour or estate of their royal mistress. Cecil and the commissioners declined to receive this paper, affirming that it misrepresented the answer of the English queen; but the Scottish deputies withdrew, repeating that they would neither treat nor appear again.¹

From this moment the conferences were truly at an end; but Elizabeth's object was still to be attained: Moray, therefore, was charged with having defamed his sovereign by an unfounded accusation, and required to defend himself. He did so, by the production of those celebrated letters and sonnets, which Elizabeth had already secretly examined, and of which he now produced both the originals and the copies. Of these, the originals have long since disappeared, and the garbled state of the copies which now exist, and which appear to have been tampered with, certainly renders their evidence of a suspicious nature. At this time, however, both originals and copies were laid before the commissioners, after which the depositions of some

¹ Anderson, vol. iv. part ii. pp. 145, 146, December 6, 1568.

servants of the late king, and the confessions of Powrie and others, executed for the murder, were produced.

Having proceeded thus far, and the English commissioners being in possession of the whole proofs against the Scottish queen, it might have been expected that some opinion would have been pronounced by them. Nothing of this kind, however, took place, neither did Elizabeth herself think it then expedient to say a word upon the subject; but, after a short season of delay, she resolved to bring the cause before a more numerous tribunal. With this view, the chief of her nobility were summoned to attend a meeting of the privy council. There came, accordingly, the Earls of Northumberland, Westmoreland, Shrewsbury, Worcester, Warwick, and Huntingdon; and from some expressions dropt by Cecil, in a letter to Norris,¹ it may be gathered, that it was intended, with their advice, to come at last to some important and final decision. Yet this third solemn preparation ended, like the rest, in nothing. After the lords had been sworn to secrecy, the whole evidence against the Queen of Scots was laid before them; and instead of a judgment upon the authenticity of the proofs, and the alleged guilt of the accused, these noble persons contented themselves with a vague allusion to the "foul matters they had seen," and a general approval of the course adopted by their sovereign. Elizabeth next sent for the Scottish commissioners; and, in reply to their demand so recently made for the admission of their royal mistress to defend herself in her presence, informed them that, from the turn matters had taken, it had become now more impossible than ever to listen to such a request. It was easy, she said, for Mary either to send some confidential person to court with her defence, or to permit the English queen

¹ Cabala, p. 155.

to despatch some noblemen to receive it, or to authorize her deputies to reply to the English commissioners. If she still refused to adopt any one of these methods to vindicate herself, she must not be surprised if so obstinate a silence should be interpreted into an admission of guilt.¹

These specious offers and arguments did not impose upon the Bishop of Ross and his colleagues. They remonstrated loudly against the injustice with which their royal mistress had been treated; they insisted that since she was denied the common privilege of a personal defence, she should be permitted to return as a free princess to her own kingdom, or, if she preferred it, to retire to France; and at the same time, as their services were no longer necessary, they requested their dismissal from court.² The queen replied, they might go to Bolton and consult with their mistress, but should not leave England till the conference was at an end. She then addressed to Mary a letter, of which the object seemed to be, to intimidate her into a defence; but so perplexed and capricious was Elizabeth's mind at this moment, that on the next day she changed her measures; and, in a private communication to Knollys the vice-chamberlain, who then had charge of the Scottish queen, declared her anxiety to proceed no farther in her cause. It appeared to her, she said, a far better method to endeavour to persuade Mary to resign the government into the hands of Moray; whilst the prince her son, for his safety, should be brought into England. She herself, too, it was added, might continue in that country, and this whole cause of hers, wherewith she had been charged, be committed to perpetual silence.³

¹ Goodal, vol. ii. pp. 257, 260, 263, 264.

² Ibid. pp. 267, 268.

³ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 279, Dec. 22, 1568.

Knollys was directed to manage matters so that this proposal might proceed from herself; but whilst Elizabeth was thus tossed about by so many intricate and contradictory schemes, Mary had transmitted directions to her commissioners which defeated this last artifice. She informed them, that although she still insisted on her right to be heard in person, and adhered to her protestation, it was not her intention to pass over in silence the atrocious calumnies with which she had been assailed; that Moray and his accomplices, in accusing her, had been guilty of a traitorous falsehood, and had imputed to her a crime of which they were guilty themselves. She then enjoined them to demand inspection both of the copies and the originals of the letters which had been produced against her, and she engaged to give such an answer as should triumphantly establish her innocence.

This spirited appeal, which was made by the Scottish commissioners in peremptory terms,¹ threw Elizabeth into new perplexity, and it required all the skill of Cecil to evade it. Recourse was had to delay, but it produced no change; and on the 7th January, the Bishop of Ross required an audience, in which he repeated the demand in still stronger language. His royal mistress, he said, was ready to answer her calumniators, and once more required, in common justice, to see the letters, or at least the copies of the letters, which had been produced by her enemies, that she might prove them to be themselves the principal authors of the murder, and expose them to all Christian princes as liars and traitors.² This fair and moderate request Elizabeth evaded. It appeared to her better, she said, that Mary should resign the crown in favour of her

¹ Goodal, vol. ii. pp. 288, 289.

² Ibid. pp. 297, 299.

son ; that, on the ground of being weary of the government, she should remain privately in England, and make a compromise with her enemies.¹ It was instantly answered by Ross, that he had his mistress's command to declare, that to such a condition she would never agree : if the letters were produced, and she was permitted to see the evidence against her, she was prepared to defend herself. She was ready also to entertain any honourable proposal by which a pardon might be extended to her disobedient subjects, notwithstanding the greatness of their offences : but to resign her crown would be to condemn herself ; it would be said, she was afraid of a public accusation, and shrunk from inquiry : this, therefore, she would sooner die than consent to, and the last words she uttered should be those of a Queen of Scotland.²

Elizabeth struggled violently against this determination, and was unwilling to receive it. She entreated Ross again to write to his mistress ; but this he steadily refused. She required him and his colleagues to confer with her council. They did so, but it was only to reiterate Mary's final resolution.³

It was now become absolutely necessary that the Queen of England should either grant this last request, or refuse it, and pronounce a final judgment. Moray earnestly urged the necessity of a return to his government. From Mary no change of mind was to be expected. The regent was accordingly summoned before the privy council, and Cecil delivered to him and his associates the definitive sentence of Elizabeth. Its terms were most extraordinary : he stated, on one hand, that as Moray and his adherents had come into England, at the desire of the queen's majesty, to answer

¹ Goodal, vol. ii. p. 300.

² Ibid. p. 301.

³ Ibid. p. 304, January 9, 1568-9.

to an accusation preferred by their sovereign, she was of opinion that nothing had as yet been brought forward against them which impaired their honour or allegiance. He declared, on the other hand, with regard to Mary, that nothing had been produced or shown by them against the queen their sovereign, which should induce the Queen of England, for any thing yet seen, to conceive an ill opinion of her good sister; and he concluded by informing Moray, that he should immediately receive permission to return to his government.¹ From this judgment, which was virtually an acquittal of Mary, it seems an inevitable inference, that the English queen, after having had the most ample opportunities of examining the letters which had been produced, either considered them to be forgeries by the other party, or found that they had been so interpolated, garbled, and tampered with, as to be unworthy of credit; for no one can deny, that if the letters were genuine, the Queen of Scots was guilty of the murder.

But if Mary was acquitted, Moray also was found guiltless; and these two conclusions, so utterly inconsistent with each other, Elizabeth had the hardihood to maintain. When we consider the solemnity of the cause, the length of the conferences, the direct accusation of Moray and his associates, the recrimination of the queen, the evidence produced, and the impossibility that both parties could be innocent, the sentence of Elizabeth is perhaps the most absurd judicial opinion ever left upon record.

It was followed by a scene no less remarkable. A privy council was called at Hampton Court, on the eve of Moray's departure. It included the Duke of Norfolk, the Earls of Pembroke, Derby, Bedford, and

¹ Goodal, vol. ii. p. 305. January 10, 1568-9.

Leicester, with Sir William Cecil, and Sir Walter Mildmay. Before it were summoned the Bishop of Ross and Lord Herries, on the one side; on the other came Moray, Morton, Lethington, Makgill, Orkney, Balnaves, and Buchanan; and when they were met, Cecil, rising up, delivered a message from the queen his mistress. She had determined, he said, to give the Earl of Moray and his adherents permission to depart for Scotland; but a rumour having arisen that they were concerned in the murder of the king, Moray had desired to be confronted with the deputies of the Queen of Scots; and he now came there to know whether they would accuse him or his adherents, in their mistress's name or in their own.¹

To this challenge the Queen of Scots' commissioners immediately answered, that in their own name they had affirmed, and would affirm, nothing; but, with respect to the queen their mistress, they had received her written instructions to accuse the Earl of Moray and his adherents as the principal authors, and some of them the actual perpetrators of the murder. They had communicated, they said, their sovereign's letters on this point to the Queen of England; they had publicly preferred their accusation; they had constantly adhered to it; they had offered to defend the innocence of their mistress; they had demanded in vain an inspection of the letters produced against her; and even now, if exact copies were furnished, they would undertake her defence, and demonstrate, by convincing proofs, what persons were indeed guilty of the murder of the king.² Moray strongly asserted his innocence, and offered to go to Bolton and abide in person the arraignment of his sovereign. It was answered, that

¹ Goodal, vol. ii. p. 307²

² Ibid. p. 308.

such a step was wholly unnecessary, as her written accusation had been produced to the Queen of England. Both parties then left the council, and next day the regent received permission to return to Scotland, (January 12.)¹

It remained to dismiss their antagonists with an appearance of liberality; and being once more called before the privy council, Cecil intimated to them his mistress's consent, that the Queen of Scots should have copies of the letters, (the originals having been redelivered to Moray;) but he first required them to procure a declaration, under her seal and signature, that she would reply to the charges which they contained. It was answered, that Elizabeth had already two writings of the precise tenor required, under the queen's hand; to seek for more was only a vexatious delay. The whole proceedings, from first to last, had been partial and unjust. If the regent and his adherents were permitted to depart, why was their royal mistress, why were they themselves, debarred from the same privilege? If the Queen of England were really solicitous that she should enter upon her defence, let her adversaries be detained until it was concluded. To this spirited remonstrance, it was coldly and briefly replied, that Moray had promised to return when called for; as for the Scottish commissioners, they also would probably be allowed to depart, but for many reasons the Queen of Scotland could not be suffered to leave England. Against this iniquitous sentence, no redress was to be hoped for: the deputies could only protest that nothing done by her in captivity should prejudice her honour, estate, or person; and having taken this final precaution, they left the council.²

¹ Goodal, vol. ii. p. 309.

² Ibid. pp. 310, 313.

It is difficult, from the conferences at York and Westminster, to draw any certain conclusion as to the probability of Mary's guilt or innocence. Both Elizabeth and the Queen of Scots acted with great art; and throughout the discussions neither the professions of the one or of the other were sincere. Thus the English queen, whilst she affected an extreme anxiety to promote a reconciliation between Mary and her subjects, was really desirous that the breach should be made irreconcilable, by the accusation of Moray, and the production of the letters. Nor does there seem to be any doubt that Norfolk's assertion was correct, when he assured Lethington she had no intention of pronouncing a decision. On the other hand, it is clear that, during the first part of the conferences, both Mary and her advisers, Ross, Herries, and Lethington, were, from whatever motive, anxious to suppress Moray's charge; that they deprecated the production of his evidence; and were only induced to go into the investigation from the hope which Elizabeth held out, that she would not permit an accusation, but exert herself, under all circumstances, to promote a reconciliation between the Scottish queen and her subjects, and restore her to the throne. It must have struck the reader that, whenever, by means of the private letters which have been preserved, we get behind the scenes, and are admitted to Mary's secret consultations with her commissioners, or to their own opinion on the conduct of the cause, we meet with no assertion of the forgery of the letters; and it seems to me difficult to reconcile her agreement to resign the crown, and suppress all inquiry, a measure only prevented by the interference of Norfolk, with her absolute innocence. On the other hand, there are some circumstances, especially occurring during the

latter part of the conferences, which tell strongly in her favour. The urgency with which, from first to last, she solicited a personal interview with Elizabeth, and promised, if it were granted, to go into her defence; the public and oft-repeated assertion of the forgery of the letters, and the offer to prove this if copies were furnished to her commissioners; Elizabeth's evasion of this request; her entire suppression of these suspicious documents; their subsequent disappearance; and the schemes of Norfolk for a marriage with Mary: these are all circumstances which seem to me exceedingly irreconcilable with her being directly guilty of the murder of her husband. Upon the whole, it appears to me, that in the present state of the controversy, we are really not in possession of evidence sufficient to enable any impartial inquirer to come to an absolute decision. I have already pointed out, as the circumstances occurred, such moral evidence against the queen as arose out of her conduct both before and after her marriage with Bothwell. The discussions at York and Westminster do not materially affect this evidence, either one way or the other; and so far as we judge of these conferences by themselves, they leave the mind under the unsatisfying and painful impression, that the conduct of the Scottish queen, throughout the whole investigation, was that of a person neither directly guilty, nor yet wholly innocent.

But, whilst animadverting on the proceedings of Elizabeth and Mary in these celebrated conferences, the conduct of the regent must not be forgotten. He was then perfectly aware of the accession of both Lethington and Morton to the murder of the king: this both prior and subsequent events proved; yet did he not scruple to bring these two accomplices to England,

and employ Morton as his assistant in the accusation of his sovereign. Such a course, which could be dictated only by the ambition of retaining the whole power of the government in his hands, seems unworthy of the man who was the leader of the Reformation in Scotland, and professed an extraordinary regard for religion: it was cruel, selfish, and unprincipled. Nor is this all: making every allowance for the defective justice of the times, it is impossible to defend Moray's management of the evidence against Mary. There can be little doubt, I think, that some letters addressed by this unfortunate princess to Bothwell, did really fall into the hands of her enemies; but the regent's refusal to produce the originals to the accused, and the state in which the copies have descended to our times, evidently garbled, altered, and interpolated, throws on him the utmost suspicion, and renders it impossible for any sincere inquirer after the truth to receive such evidence. If the only proofs of Mary's guilt had been these letters produced at Westminster, the task of her defenders would have been comparatively an easy one.¹ It is the moral evidence arising out of her own conduct, which weighs heaviest against her. But to return.

¹ I have purposely abstained from quoting or entering into the arguments of the writers in the controversy which has arisen on the subject of these letters, and of Mary's guilt or innocence. My object has been to attempt, from original and unquestionable evidence, to give the facts; not to overload the narrative with argument or controversy. The reader who may wish to pursue the points farther will find ample room for study in the volumes of Goodal, of Tytler my venerated grandfather, of Laing, Whitaker, and Chalmers. Upon the whole, my grandfather's "Historical and Critical Enquiry," as it appears in the 4th edition, London, 1790, may still, I think, be appealed to, not only as the best defence of Mary, but, in a controversy which has been deformed by much coarse and bitter invective, as the most pleasing and elegant work which has appeared on the subject. It is, throughout, the production of a scholar and a gentleman.

Upon the conclusion of the conferences, the Scottish queen exerted herself to rouse her partisans in Scotland, and animate them to a vindication of their independence against the practices of Elizabeth. Acting by the advice of Cecil her chief minister, the Queen of England had formed a scheme by which, under the nominal regency of Moray, she would herself have managed the whole affairs of the country. The project, drawn up in the handwriting of its astute author, still exists; the young prince was to be delivered up by Moray, and educated in England under the eye of Elizabeth; the regent was to be continued in his office, receiving, of course, his instructions from the Queen of England, on whom he was to be wholly dependent; and the Queen of Scots was to be persuaded to remain where she was, by arguments which Cecil minutely detailed.¹ These insidious proposals were discovered by Mary, and being communicated to her friends, exaggerated by her fears and indignation, raised the utmost alarm in Scotland. The regent, it was said, had sold the country; he was ready to deliver up the principal fortresses; he had agreed to acknowledge the superiority of England; he looked himself to the throne, and was about to procure a deed of legitimation, by which he should be capable of succeeding if the young prince died without issue. Such reports flew from one end of the country to the other; and as he was not on the spot to contradict them, and cope with his adversaries, their effects were highly favourable to the captive queen.

In the meantime, although he had received permission to return to his government, Moray found himself very unpleasantly situated. He was deeply in debt; and although he had lent himself an easy tool

¹ MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. i. fol. 273, 22d December, 1568.

in the hands of the Queen of England, she refused to assist him. If, indeed, we may believe Sir James Melvil, who had an intimate personal acquaintance with the history of these times, she really despised him for his subserviency, and enjoyed his distresses. This was not all: the Duke of Norfolk was enraged at his late conduct; he had broken all the promises made to this nobleman; and as Norfolk commanded the whole strength of the northern counties, through which lay Moray's route homeward, he dreaded being waylaid before he crossed the border. Nor was such an apprehension without good foundation, as a plot for his assassination, of which it is said both Norfolk and Mary were cognizant, was actually organized, and the execution of it committed to the Earl of Westmoreland.¹ Under these difficulties Moray had recourse to dissimulation. With much address he procured a reconciliation with Norfolk, expressed deep contrition for the part he had been compelled to act against his sovereign, and declared, that his feelings upon the subject of the marriage between her and the duke remained unaltered; it was still his conviction, he said, that such a union would be eminently beneficial to both kingdoms, and he was ready to promote it by every means in his power. To prove his sincerity he opened the matter to the Bishop of Ross, he sent Robert Melvil to propose it to Mary herself, he promised to use his influence for its furtherance with the Scottish nobles; and in the end he so completely reassured the duke, that this nobleman procured the regent a loan of five thousand pounds from Elizabeth, and sent the strictest injunctions to his adherents not to molest him in any way upon his return.²

¹ Murrin's State Papers, p. 51.

² Lesley's negotiations in Anderson, vol. iii. p. 40.

With Mary herself, his artifices did not stand him in less stead. Her friends in Scotland were at this time mustering in great strength. She had appointed the Duke of Chastelherault and the Earls of Argyle and Huntley her lieutenants. The two earls commanded the north; the duke was ready to rise with the whole strength of the Hamiltons; Lord Boyd and other powerful nobles were preparing for action; and had these combined forces been brought into the field, Moray must have been overwhelmed. But at this crisis the queen and Norfolk were deceived by his professions of repentance; and Mary, trusting to his expressions of devotion to her interest, commanded her adherents to abstain from all hostilities. They reluctantly obeyed; and the regent, congratulating himself on his own address and the credulity of his opponents, returned secure and unmolested to his government.

On his arrival in Scotland Moray dropped the mask, and exerted himself with energy against his opponents. He held a convention of the nobility, clergy, and commissaries of the burghs at Stirling; he procured an approbation of his conduct, and a ratification of his proceedings in England; and lastly, he gave orders for a general muster of the force of the kingdom.¹

On the other hand, the duke, Cassillis, and Lord Herries, as soon as they came home, assumed a bold tone; issued a proclamation, in which the regent was branded as a usurper; mustered their strength, fortified their houses, and showed a determination to put all to the arbitrement of the sword. But the rapidity

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, 8th February, 1568-9. Ibid. same to same, 17th February, 1568-9. Ibid. same to same, 25th February, 1568-9. Ibid. B.C. Moray to Sir John Forster, 15th March, 1568-9.

with which Moray assembled his army disconcerted them. It was evident that, although willing to enter into terms, he was better prepared than his opponents to act upon the offensive; and after a personal conference with the regent at Glasgow, (March 13th,) they concluded a treaty of peace.¹ It was agreed, that a convention of the nobility should be held upon the 10th of April, for the settlement of the affairs of the country, and that in the mean season there should be a suspension of hostilities. Moray simply insisted that Chastelherault and his adherents should acknowledge the authority of the king. The duke agreed to this, on condition that all who had been forfeited for their obedience to the queen, should be restored; that such measures should be taken for the maintenance of her honour and welfare as were consistent with the sovereignty of the king; and that a committee, selected from the nobles on both sides, should meet at Edinburgh, to deliberate upon a general pacification. It embraced the regent himself, the duke, and the Earls of Huntley, Argyle, Morton, Mar, Athole, Glencairn, and Lord Herries. For his part, Moray stipulated that these noblemen should repair to Edinburgh and return to their estates in security; whilst they agreed to disband their forces, and surrender themselves, or their eldest sons, as a security for the performance of the treaty.²

A temporary tranquillity being thus restored, the leaders of both parties repaired to Stirling, where the Archbishop of St Andrews, the Earl of Cassillis, and Lord Herries, placed themselves in Moray's hands as hostages; and the regent, in return, released the pri-

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 141. MS. letter, State-paper Office, 13th March, 1468-9. Heads of the communing between the Earl of Moray on the one part, and the Earl of Cassillis and others on the other part.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, March 15, 1568-9. Moray to Sir J. Forster.

soners taken at the battle of Langside. It was expected that he would next disband his force; but, seizing this moment of leisure, he led them against the border marauders, who, from the long interruption of justice in these districts, were become formidable to both kingdoms. His expedition was successful, and it was a politic stroke; for it afforded him a good excuse for keeping up his forces, and it taught them confidence in themselves and their leader. When he returned to the capital, it was with spirits animated by victory, and with a secret determination never to lay down his arms till he had compelled his enemies to submit to such terms as he was pleased to dictate.

The 10th of April, being the day for the convention of the nobles, now arrived; and, according to agreement, the duke, Cassillis, Herries, and other nobles who composed the committee, (Huntley and Argyle excepted,) met at Edinburgh. Two points of much difficulty, and almost irreconcilable with each other, were to be settled—the continuance of the king's government, and the restoration and return of the captive queen; but Moray had no serious intention of entering into discussion upon either. When, therefore, the counsellors were assembled, he rose, and haughtily handing a paper to the Duke of Chastelherault, desired him and his associates, before proceeding farther, to sign an acknowledgment of the king's authority. The duke remonstrated: the demand, he said, was unjust and premature, as the regent well knew. The object of this conference, was to deliberate on the measures to be adopted towards their captive sovereign: let him propose such measures himself, or listen to him and his friends when they brought them forward. If both parties were agreed upon them, he and his adherents were ready to subscribe to the king's autho-

rity: they had observed every article of the late treaty, they had trusted themselves in the regent's power, their hostages were in his hands, their lives and their lands at his disposal; but they had relied upon his honour, most solemnly pledged and signed, nor could they believe that he would disgrace himself by an act of fraud and tyranny. To this spirited remonstrance Moray did not vouchsafe an answer, but ordered his guards instantly to apprehend the duke and Lord Herries. The last nobleman, being the most formidable, was hurried a prisoner to the castle of Edinburgh without a moment's delay; the duke next morning shared the same fate.¹

This outrage was beheld with deep indignation by the country, and estranged from the regent some of his best friends; but it intimidated his opponents, and rendered Argyle and Huntley more inclined to an accommodation. These noblemen wielded the whole power of the northern districts, and had refused to sign the pacification at Glasgow. So deep was their enmity to Moray, that they had accused him, in a public paper, presented during the conferences at Westminster, of being accessory to the murder of the king; and since that time they had left nothing undone to support the interests of their sovereign, and destroy the authority of the regent. But the late scenes in the capital had alarmed them; they saw him supported by England, at the head of a large force, his opponents in prison, the southern part of the kingdom reduced to obedience; and they deemed it prudent to enter into an accommodation. Argyle consented to acknowledge the king's authority, and was immediately received into favour. With Huntley, who had acted

¹ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 219. Historie of James the Sext, pp. 39, 40. MS. letter, State-paper Office, Herries to Elizabeth, 5th July, 1569.

more independently for the queen, and granted commissions in her name, the arrangement was more difficult. But, at last, all was settled in a meeting at St Andrews, and the northern lord subscribed his adherence to the government, surrendered his artillery, and delivered hostages for his peaceable behaviour, (10th May.)¹ To secure his advantage, the regent immediately led his army into the north, reduced the country, levied heavy fines on all who had risen in favour of the queen, compelled the clans to swear allegiance, and returned, enriched and confident, to hold a great convention of the nobility, which he had appointed to meet at Perth on the 25th of July.²

To explain the object of this assembly, we must look back for a moment, and recall to mind the intrigues which had taken place between Moray, Lethington, and the Duke of Norfolk, to bring about a marriage between this nobleman and the Scottish queen. The project had originated in the busy and politic brain of Lethington; it had been encouraged and furthered by the regent; and its success was ardently anticipated by the duke, who carried on a correspondence with Moray upon the subject, and trusted in the end to procure the consent of his own sovereign. A secret of this kind, however, is difficult to keep in a court; and something coming to Elizabeth's ears, she broke forth with much passion, and attacked the duke, who saved himself by his address. He would admit, he said, that proposals had been made to him on the subject by some noblemen: these he could not have prevented, but he had never seriously entertained them;

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Lord Hunsdon to Cecil, May 19, 1569, and Spottiswood, p. 229.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, Aberdeen, July 7, 1569.

and, indeed, he was not likely to do so, as he loved to sleep upon a safe pillow.¹ His earnestness reassured Elizabeth; and Norfolk, believing that he had lulled all her suspicions, had the rashness and folly to continue his correspondence with Mary.

After some time, the scheme assumed a definite form, and was secretly supported by a large party of the nobility in both countries. Leicester earnestly promoted it; the Earls of Arundel, Pembroke, Bedford, Shrewsbury, Northumberland, and Westmoreland, gave it their full concurrence: Sir Nicholas Throckmorton laboured warmly in the cause; even the cautious Cecil, to whom it was early communicated, contributed his advice.²

In Scotland the plan was managed by Lethington, the regent, and his secretary Wood; whilst the Bishop of Ross and the Lord Boyd communicated with Mary, who corresponded with the duke, and professed her readiness to be divorced from Bothwell. Nothing, in short, was wanting, but the consent of Elizabeth and the concurrence of the Scottish nobility. To conciliate and convince the English queen, Leicester proposed that Lethington should repair to England: to ensure the second, it was resolved that the matter should be brought before that convention of the whole nobility which was to meet at Perth on Moray's return from the north.

In the meantime, whilst these secret transactions were carefully concealed, the Bishop of Ross, who remained in England, carried on an open negotiation for his mistress's restoration. To this Elizabeth, with the desire of keeping a check over Moray, affected to

¹ Trial of the Duke of Norfolk, Jardine, vol. i. p. 162.

² Lesley's negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 51, 61, 62. Camden's Elizabeth, Kennet, vol. ii. p. 420.

listen; and Lord Boyd was despatched with some proposals on this subject, to be communicated first to Mary herself, and afterwards, when she had given her consent, to be broken to the Scottish nobility. These articles, Camden affirms, were drawn up by Leicester.¹ They stipulated that the Scottish queen, on condition of being reinstated in the government of her kingdom, should enter into a perpetual league with England, establish the Protestant religion, receive to favour her rebellious subjects, and give assurance to Elizabeth that neither she nor her issue should be molested by any claims upon the English throne. Another article was added on the marriage with Norfolk, but was carefully concealed from the English queen. It recommended this union, as the only measure which was likely to restore tranquillity to both kingdoms; and, to enforce it more effectually, Leicester and his friends despatched a special messenger, Mr Candish, who accompanied Lord Boyd to Tutbury, and carried letters and costly presents to Mary.² To some of the conditions she immediately consented; on others she demurred, and requested time to consult her foreign allies; as to the projected marriage, her sorrowful experience, she said, inclined her to prefer a solitary life; yet, if the remaining conditions were settled to her satisfaction, she was not indisposed to Norfolk, provided Elizabeth were consulted, and her consent obtained.³

On receiving this favourable reply, Norfolk became impatient to complete his ambitious project. He courted popularity, kept open house, strengthened himself by every possible means, and communicated

¹ Camden's Elizabeth. Kennet, vol. ii. pp. 419-420.

² Lesley's negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 51, 52.

³ Ibid. pp. 53, 54.

his design to the French and Spanish ambassadors, who, after consulting their courts, gave him their encouragement and support. Nor did he neglect the Scottish regent, with whom he kept up a close correspondence, and who assured him of his continued fidelity and devotion to his service. It may seem strange that Norfolk should have so long delayed to sound Elizabeth upon his great design; but Leicester, in whom he chiefly confided, strongly dissuaded him from any premature disclosure; and the deeper he and his confederates were engaged in their secret intrigues, the more they shrunk from the dreaded task of revealing them to a princess whose violence and severity held them in constant awe.

Meanwhile, though kept in the dark as to the marriage, the English queen was urged to conclude an agreement for the restoration of Mary, on the ground of those articles which had been submitted to her by the Bishop of Ross; and, after a conference with her privy council, Lord Boyd was despatched upon this business into Scotland.¹ This nobleman carried with him letters to the regent from Elizabeth, Mary, the Duke of Norfolk, and Sir Nicholas Throckmorton; and meeting Moray at Elgin, on his return from his northern expedition, he immediately laid before him his despatches and instructions.² The letters of Elizabeth contained three propositions in Mary's behalf, and she intimated her desire that one or the other of them should be adopted. She might be restored she said, fully and absolutely to her royal estate: or, secondly, she might be united in the government with her son, and retain the title of queen, whilst the administration continued in the regent till

¹ Lesley's negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 54, 55. ² Ibid. p. 70.

the prince had attained the age of seventeen: or, lastly, she might return to Scotland as a private person, and be honourably maintained in quiet and retirement. In Mary's own letter, which was brought by Lord Boyd, she briefly intimated her desire that judges should be appointed to decide upon the lawfulness of her marriage with Bothwell; and should it be pronounced illegal, her request was, that sentence of nullity should be pronounced, so that she might be free to marry where she pleased. This request evidently pointed to the projected union with Norfolk, and the subject was insisted on in the letters of the duke himself and Sir N. Throckmorton. Norfolk, in addressing the regent, contented himself with warm professions of friendship, and assured him that, as to his marriage with the queen his sister, he never meant to recede from his promise, having proceeded so far that he could not go back without dishonour. He referred him to Lord Boyd, who was fully instructed by Mary and himself to reply to any doubts which he might entertain, and begged him to believe that he felt for him the affection not only of a faithful friend, but a natural brother.¹

Throckmorton's letters were addressed both to Moray and to Lethington. To the regent he observed, that the time was come when he must give up all his conscientious scruples and objections: the match was now supported by a party too powerful and too numerous to be resisted; if he opposed it, his overthrow was inevitable; if he promoted it, no man's friendship would be so highly prized, no man's estimation be greater or more popular. In his letter to Lethington, Throckmorton urged the necessity of his hastening to

¹ Haynes, p. 520.

court, for the purpose of breaking the affair to Elizabeth. Of her consent, he said, he need have no doubt. She was too wise a princess to risk the tranquillity of her government, her own security, and the happiness of her people, for the gratification of her own fancy, or the passions of any inconsiderate individual; and he concluded by assuring him, that the wisest, noblest, and mightiest persons in England were all engaged upon their side.

On receiving these letters, the regent, as we have seen, summoned a convention of the nobility at Perth, on the 25th of July; an assembly of the church was held at the same time in the capital, and commissioners deputed from it to the meeting of the nobles. It was impossible so acute a person as Moray should fail to perceive that the queen's restoration and the proposed marriage, if carried into effect, must be a deathblow to his power; and whilst he affected to fulfil his engagements to the duke with scrupulous fidelity, he secretly persuaded his partisans to oppose the match with their utmost influence.¹

When Boyd delivered his letters at the convention, containing Elizabeth's three proposals, the effect of this disingenuous dealing was perceived: Mary's full restoration to her dignity was refused; her association with the young king in the government was also declared dangerous and impossible; but the third scheme, for her restoration to liberty, and being reduced to a private condition within her dominions, appeared to them more likely to succeed. The assembly, however, arrived at no definite resolution; and when the queen's letter, regarding a divorce from Bothwell, was laid

¹ Lesley's negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. p. 71, MS. State-paper Office. Names of the noblemen, &c. assembled at Perth, 28th July, 1569.

before them, a violent debate arose between Lethington and his friends, who secretly supported the intended marriage with Norfolk, and Makgill the clerk-register, with the leaders of the Presbyterian party. It was argued by the secretary, between whom and Moray there had recently been great coldness, that the divorce might be concluded without injury or disrespect either to the king or the church. To this Makgill answered, that Mary's own letters confuted him, and insulted their sovereign. The king was their only head and master, yet she still addressed them as her subjects, and subscribed herself their queen. The Bishop of St Andrews was a heretic, a member cut off from the true vine, an obstinate rebel and papist, yet she wrote to him as the head of the church. To vouchsafe an answer to such an application, would be in some measure to admit its justice; to grant it, nothing less than treason and blasphemy. It was in vain that Lethington attempted a reply, and sarcastically insinuated, that they who were so recently anxious for the queen's separation from Bothwell, had now altered their tone with unaccountable versatility. He was interrupted by Richardson the treasurer, who started from his seat, calling the assembly to witness that the secretary had argued against the king's authority, and protested, that any who dared to support him should be accounted traitors and dealt with accordingly. This appeal finished the controversy, and Mary's proposal for a divorce was indignantly rejected.¹ The assembly then broke up with mutual expressions of contempt and defiance, the queen's deliverance appearing still more distant than before.

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Lord Hunsdon to Cecil, Berwick, 5th August, 1569. *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 41.

But if the affairs of this unfortunate princess were thus unsuccessful in her own dominions, an event which now happened in England overwhelmed her with fresh affliction. The renewed intrigues of the Duke of Norfolk were discovered; and Elizabeth's suspicions being once awakened, she never rested, till, by the assistance of Cecil, her indefatigable and vigilant minister, the whole plot was unravelled.¹ These discoveries were made when the duke scarcely suspected it, till he was awakened from his security by some dark speeches of the queen, who taunted him with his high hopes, and bade him beware on what pillow he leant his head.² But this moderate tone of reprehension was short-lived; for on ascertaining the extent to which the plot had been carried under her own eye, by her principal nobility, and without a pretence of soliciting her consent, Elizabeth's fury was ungovernable. Leicester and his associates hastened to propitiate her resentment by a full discovery, and basely purchased their own security with the betrayal of Norfolk. His example was followed by Moray, who with equal meanness, on the first challenge of the English queen, delivered up the whole of his secret correspondence with Norfolk, and excused himself by declaring, that a fear of assassination had compelled him to join a conspiracy of which he secretly disapproved.³ He pleaded also, and with some reason, that Elizabeth's own conduct was enough to mitigate her resentment. If she had adopted a decided part against Mary, they would have known how to receive Norfolk's proposals; but her vacillating policy, and the favour with which the captive queen was treated,

¹ Maitland, vol. ii. p. 1090.

² Spottiswood, p. 231.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil. Hawick, 22d October, 1569, Trial of the Duke of Norfolk, in Jardine, vol. i. pp. 157-160.

created, he said, an equal uncertainty in his mind, and that of his supporters.¹

As for the unfortunate duke himself, he appears to have acted with that indecision which, in matters of this kind, and with such an adversary as Elizabeth, is commonly fatal. His friends admonished him to throw off the mask and take the field at once, and had he followed their advice, his popularity was so great that the consequences might have been serious: but he rejected their advice, and in an apology addressed to the queen, assured her that it had been his fixed resolution, throughout the whole course of the negotiations, never to marry the Queen of Scots without the consent of his sovereign. His guilt lay in the delay, but his allegiance was untainted, and his devotion to her service as entire as it had always been. This letter was sent from Kenninghall, his seat in Norfolk, to which he had precipitately retired on his first suspicion of a discovery. Elizabeth's reply was an immediate summons to the court. The duke did not venture to obey without first consulting Cecil: the secretary assured him that he was safe: he complied, and was instantly arrested and lodged in the Tower.²

The discovery was followed by a more rigorous confinement of the Scottish queen, who was now removed from Winkfield to Tutbury: her repositories were ransacked for letters; and she was committed to the custody of the Earl of Huntingdon, a nobleman particularly obnoxious to her, who was associated in this charge with Shrewsbury, her former keeper.³ Her most trusty domestics were dismissed, the number of her attendants diminished, her letters intercepted and

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, Dumfries, 29th October, 1569.

² Haynes, pp. 528, 533.

³ Ibid. pp. 526-527.

conveyed to the Queen of England, and all her actions so rigorously watched, that it became impossible for her to communicate, even in the most common affairs, with her friends.²

Nothing can more strongly mark the sudden and extraordinary changes of these times than an event which soon after occurred in Scotland—the arraignment of Lethington. The regent, since the discovery of his intrigues with Norfolk, had fallen into suspicion with Elizabeth. His secretary Wood, also, who had been intrusted with his negotiations at the English court, by his duplicity and false dealing had incurred her resentment; and although Moray hastened to appease her, by a delivery of the letters which convicted the duke, she was aware that Lethington still intrigued upon the subject, and suspected that the regent, from their long habits of intimacy, might be induced to favour his designs. Her fears, indeed, on this point proved to be unfounded; for Moray, as we learn from Melvil, had recently forsaken his old friends, and suffered himself to be surrounded by a circle of base and needy parasites. But of this estrangement Elizabeth was ignorant. She therefore directed Cecil to keep a vigilant eye upon the operations of the regent; Lord Hunsdon, the governor of Berwick, received the same instructions; the proceedings of the convention at Perth, and the subsequent conduct of the Scottish governor, were severely criticised; and Moray found, to his mortification, that whilst he had incurred extreme odium by the betrayal of Norfolk, he was himself an object of suspicion.

Whilst Elizabeth, however, only suspected Moray, she was incensed to the highest degree against Leth-

¹ Lesley's negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. p. 78.

ington, whom she now discovered to be the originator of the marriage plot and the greatest partisan of Norfolk. This restless and indefatigable politician, since his unsuccessful efforts in the convention at Perth, had sought security in Athole, where he was surrounded by his friends, and continued to incite them to renew their exertions in favour of the Scottish queen; and Moray, who, like other victims of ambition, had become sufficiently unscrupulous in the means which he adopted to consolidate his power, resolved to recommend himself to Elizabeth by the ruin of his former associate.

Under the pretence of requiring his immediate assistance at Stirling, in the business of the government, he requested the secretary to leave his retreat in Athole and return to court. Suspicious of some intrigue, he obeyed with reluctance; and scarce had he taken his seat at council, which was attended by Moray, Mar, Morton, Athole, and Semple, when word was brought that Crawford, a gentleman from the Earl of Lennox, requested audience on business of moment. He was admitted, and, falling down on his knees, demanded justice to be done on William Maitland of Lethington, and Sir James Balfour, as the murderers of their sovereign.¹ Amongst the councillors, the only one who heard this sudden accusation unmoved was the secretary himself. With a smile of calm contempt he observed, that his long-continued services might have exempted him from so foul and false a charge, preferred, too, by so mean a person; but he was ready to find surety to stand his trial on any day which was appointed, and he had no fears for the verdict. Crawford, however, still kneeling, warmly remonstrated against

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Lord Hunsdon to Cecil, Newcastle, September 7th, 1569. *Diurnal of Occurrents*, pp. 147, 148.

his being left at large. He, a gentleman, and a servant of the late king,¹ had publicly arraigned that guilty man of treason: he was ready to prosecute and adduce his proofs, and under such circumstances he appealed to the council whether bail could possibly be accepted. After a violent debate, it was determined that the secretary should be committed; and Moray, who secretly congratulated himself on the issue of his intrigue, carried him to the capital, and confined him in the house of Forrester, one of his own dependants. At the same time a party of horse were despatched to Fife, who surrounded Balfour's residence at Monimail, and brought him and his brother George prisoners to Edinburgh.²

The arrest of Lethington increased the unpopularity of the regent; but his victim had scarcely fallen into his hands ere he was again torn from him; for the secretary's old associate Grange, dreading some new treachery of Moray and Morton, now closely leagued together, attacked the house in which he was confined, and, by a mixture of stratagem and courage,³ carried him off in triumph to the castle. This rescue deeply mortified Moray, who believed that in securing Lethington he was not only performing an acceptable service to Elizabeth, but removing the most formidable opponent of his own government. He dissembled his indignation, however; and as the secretary still declared his readiness to answer the accusation, con-

¹ *Supra*, vol. v. p. 380.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, Stirling, September 5th, 1569. Also, Lord Hunsdon to Cecil, Alnwick, September 8th, 1569. *Diurnal of Occurrents*, pp. 147-148.

³ Melvil's *Memoirs*, p. 218. It is stated by Robert Melvil, that Grange, to forward his purpose, forged an order under the handwriting of the regent. MS. declaration of Robert Melvil in the Hopetoun Papers.

tented himself with appointing the 22d of November as the day of trial.

Meanwhile England became disturbed by a rebellion in the northern counties, which at first assumed a formidable appearance. Its leaders were the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, its object no less than the restoration of the Roman Catholic faith, the destruction of the Protestant constitution of that country, and the delivery of the Scottish queen. So imminent did the danger at first appear, that Elizabeth issued an order under the great seal for Mary's execution, which seems only to have been arrested by the sudden and total failure of the insurrection.¹ It arose from the intrigues of the Duke of Norfolk and the hopes excited amongst the English Catholics by the anticipated restoration of Mary. Amongst Norfolk's most powerful friends were the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, two peers of ancient lineage, powerful connexions, and steady attachment to the church of Rome. They commanded the strength of the northern counties; and had Norfolk chosen to have bid defiance to Elizabeth, they were ready to have risen in arms in his defence. His submission and imprisonment broke, but did not put an end to, their intrigues; and, irritated at his desertion, they sought the support of the King of Spain, and secured the services of the Duke of Alva and the Bishop of Ross.

This prelate, a man of great talents and restless intrigue, was the ambassador and confidential minister of the Scottish queen, and by his secret negotiations, his mistress, who in her first imprisonment at Bolton

¹ See Proofs and Illustrations, No. III. Letter of Leicester to Cecil, communicated by Mr Bruce.

had kept up a correspondence with Northumberland,¹ became involved in these new commotions. Alva promised to assist the two earls with a large body of men, and sent over the Marquis Vitelli, one of his best officers, under the pretence of a mission to Elizabeth, but really to forward the rebellion. Before, however, these preparations were completed, Elizabeth obtained a knowledge of the plot, and instantly summoned both to court. Whilst they hesitated, intelligence arrived that Sussex, the queen's lieutenant in the north, had received orders to arrest them; and scarce was this message delivered, when Northumberland's castle was beset by a body of horse. He escaped with difficulty, joined the Earl of Westmoreland, and, as the only chance now left them, they dropped the mask and broke into rebellion. An enterprise thus prematurely forced on, could scarcely be successful. In their proclamation the two earls professed a devoted attachment to the queen's person, and declared their only object to be the restoration of the faith of their fathers, the dismissal of false counsellors, and the liberation of Norfolk. They had confidently looked to being joined by the large body of the English Roman Catholics all over the country; but their utmost strength never amounted to six thousand men, and these soon melted away into a more insignificant force. Sir John Forster, the warden of the middle marches, made himself master of Northumberland's castles of Alnwick and Warkworth, and by taking possession of the principal passes, effectually cut off all communication between the earl and his vassals in those parts: thence marching to Newcastle, and being joined by Sir Henry Percy, Northumberland's brother, he speedily reduced the rebels in the northern parts of Durham; so that

¹ Haynes, pp. 594-595.

when Sussex took the field with seven thousand men, the rebellion was already expiring.¹

The two rebel earls, with a force which diminished every hour, retired first upon Hexham, and afterwards fell back upon Naworth castle, in Cumberland. Here they suddenly dispersed their little army, and fled with a handful of horse into Scotland. Westmoreland took refuge with the Lairds of Buccleuch and Fernyhirst, two of the most powerful chiefs in those parts; whilst Northumberland, in company with black Ormiston, a traitor who was present at the king's murder, the Laird's Jock, and other border banditti, threw himself into the Harlaw, a stronghold of the Armstrongs.² These events passed with so much rapidity, that Moray, who, on the first intelligence of the insurrection, had professed his readiness to assist Elizabeth with the whole forces of the realm, was scarcely able to muster his strength before he heard that assistance was unnecessary.³

From such commotions in England, so intimately connected with the fortunes of the captive queen, we must turn to the condition of her partisans in her own country. Of these, the great leaders were Lethington and Grange. Grange was in possession of the castle of Edinburgh, within which now lay his friend Lethington, Lord Herries, the Archbishop of St Andrews, and others who supported the cause of Mary; professing,

¹ Lingard, vol. viii. pp. 52, 58. Camden, in Kennet, vol. ii. pp. 421, 422.

² Copy of the time, State-paper Office, instructions for Mr George Cary. Signed by Sussex, Hunsdon, and Sadler, 22d December, 1569. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, copy of the time, Moray to Sussex, Peebles, 22d December, 1569.

³ For a more detailed and interesting account of this insurrection in 1569, the reader is referred to a valuable work recently published by my respected friend Sir Cuthbert Sharpe, entitled, *Memorials of the Rebellion of 1569*. Nichols: London, 1840.

at the same time, their attachment to their prince, and an earnest desire for the pacification of the country.

Opposed to them was the regent, supported by England and the party of the Kirk, who kept up a constant correspondence with Cecil, Elizabeth's minister, and whose measures were entirely dictated and overruled by English influence.

Since his accession to the chief power in the state, but more especially since the termination of the conferences at Westminster, Moray's popularity had been on the decline. Men blamed his conduct to his sovereign, his treachery to his associates, his haughtiness to his own countrymen, his humility and subserviency to a foreign power, as England was then considered. They accused him of being surrounded by troops of low and needy flatterers, who prospered upon the ruin of the ancient nobility, and persuaded him to betray his former friends, by whose efforts he had been placed in the regency. They declared, and with some truth, that having once sold himself to England, he had become insensible to every suggestion of honour and good faith. Hence his betrayal of Norfolk, his imprisonment of Herries and the Duke of Chastelherault, his treacherous accusation of Lethington, his threatened severity to Northumberland: all this weighed strongly against him; and those who had been most willing to anticipate the happiest results from his administration, were now ready to acknowledge their mortification and disappointment.¹ Yet, although thus fallen in public estimation, and surrounded by enemies, Moray, naturally daring and intrepid, showed no symptoms of decreasing energy; and as the time approached when Lethington was to stand his trial for the murder of

¹ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 220.

the king, he appeared fully determined to insist on the prosecution.

When the day arrived, however, a scene presented itself very different from the pacific solemnities of public justice ; Lord Home, at an early hour, occupied the city with a large body of horse. He was speedily followed by multitudes of the secretary's friends, all armed, and surrounded by their retainers ; and as every hour was increasing the concourse, Morton, a principal accuser of Lethington, refused to risk his person within the city. Amidst this warlike concourse, Clement Little, an able advocate of the time, entered where the council had assembled, and protested, that as his client, the secretary, was ready to stand his trial, and no prosecutor had appeared, he was entitled to a verdict of acquittal. Moray, however, who had taken care to be strongly guarded, rose up, and declared, that as long as the town was occupied by armed troops, no trial should take place, and no verdict be pronounced. He had been placed, he said, by their unsolicited suffrages, in the first office in the state ; he had given his solemn oath to administer justice ; they had promised to obey the king, and assist him in maintaining the law. What, then, meant this armed assembly ? Was it thus they fulfilled their promise ? or did they think to intimidate him into their opinion ? That, at least, he should show them was a vain expectation ; and therefore he now prorogued the trial till quiet was restored, and they were prepared, having laid aside their arms, to resume the demeanour of peaceable subjects. Such was Moray's speech, as reported by himself in a letter written next day to Cecil ; but we learn, from the same source, that the regent was daily expecting a communication from Elizabeth, containing her instructions how to conduct himself in Lethington's

case, and that he delayed the trial to give time for their arrival: an additional proof of his entire subser-viency to England.¹

He concluded the same letter by an allusion to the recent rebellion in the north:—"I have offered," said he, "already to Mr Marshal of Berwick, [he meant Sir William Drury,] to take such part in her highness's cause and quarrel with the whole power of this realm, that will do for me, as he shall advertise me; * * * and since the matter not only touches her highness's obedience, but that we may see our own destruction compassed, who are professors of the Gospel, let not time drive, but with speed let us understand her majesty's mind."²

Moray followed up this offer by summoning the whole force of the kingdom to meet him in arms at Peebles on the 20th December, for the defence of their native country, the preservation of their wives and children, and the liberty of the true religion.³ He had received early intelligence from Sussex of the flight of the rebel earls into Scotland, and immediately despatched messengers to the seaports to keep a strict look-out, lest any should take shipping and escape. But his chief reliance lay in his own activity; and marching rapidly towards Hawick, he beset the Harlaw, a tower in which Northumberland had found shelter from Hecky, or Hector Armstrong, a border thief. This villain, bribed by the regent's gold, sold the English earl to Moray, who carried him to

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, Edinburgh, 22d Nov. 1569, endorsed in Cecil's hand, "Earl of Murray to me, concerning the day of law for Lydington."

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, Edinburgh, 22d November, 1569.

³ MS. State-paper Office, copy, the Regent's Proclamation, Edinburgh, 18th December, 1569.

Edinburgh, and soon after imprisoned him in Lochleven.¹

Although this new act of severity and corruption increased the regent's unpopularity in Scotland, it being suspected that he meant to give up his captive to Elizabeth, his zeal and activity completely restored him to the good opinion of this princess, and he had the satisfaction to learn, that she had warmly commended him to his ambassador, the Abbot of Dunfermline. This imboldened him to make a proposal on which he had long meditated, and for which the English queen was by no means prepared. It was no less than that she should surrender Mary into his hands to be kept safely in Scotland, a solemn promise being given by him, "that she should live her natural life, without any sinister means taken to shorten the same."² It was added that a maintenance suitable to her high rank should be provided for her; and the arguments addressed to Elizabeth upon the subject, in a paper intrusted to Nicholas Elphinston, who was sent with the request to the English court, were drawn up with no little art and ability. After an enumeration of the late miseries and commotions in England, it stated, that "as Mary was notoriously the ground and fountain from whom all these tumults, practices, and daily dangers did flow," and as her remaining within the realm of England undoubtedly gave her every opportunity to continue them, there was no more certain means to provide a remedy, and

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 154. Lesley's negotiations, p. 83. Anderson, vol. iii. Hence a border proverb, "To take Hecky's cloak," to betray a friend. Percy's Reliques, vol. i. p. 3. song iv.

² Copy of the "Instrument," MS. State-paper Office, but without date. On the back are these names, in Cecil's hand,

Er: MURRAY,
MORTON,
MAR,

Er: GLENCAIRN,
MONTROSE, M.
MARSHALL, M.

Lr: LYNDSEY,
RUTHVEN,
SEMPL.

bring quiet to both countries, than to bring her back into Scotland, thus removing her to a greater distance from foreign realms, and daily intelligence with their princes or their ambassadors.¹

In this petition Moray was joined by Morton, Mar, Glencairn, Lords Lindsay, Ruthven, and Semple, with the Masters of Marshal and Montrose. At the same time Knox addressed a letter to Cecil. He described himself as writing with one foot in the grave, alluded to the late rebellion, and recommended him to strike at the root, meaning Mary, if he would prevent the branches from budding again. It appears to me that the expressions of this great Reformer, whose stern spirit was little softened by age, go as far as to urge the absolute necessity of putting Mary to death; but his words are somewhat dark and enigmatical. The letter, which is wholly in his own hand, is too remarkable to be omitted.

“Benefits of God’s hands received, crave that men be thankful, and danger known would be avoided. If ye strike not at the root, the branches that appear to be broken will bud again, and that more quickly than men can believe, with greater force than we would wish. Turn your een² unto your God: forget yourself and yours, when consultation is to be had in matters of such weight as presently ly upon you. Albeit I have been fremedly³ handled, yet was I never enemy to the quietness of England. God grant you wisdom. In haste, of⁴ Edinburgh, the second of Janur. Yours to command in God,

“John Knox, with his one foot in the grave.⁵

“Mo⁶ days than one would not suffice to express what I think.”

¹ MS. copy, *ibid. ut supra.* ² Eyes. ³ Strangely. ⁴ At.

⁵ MS. letter, State-paper Office, John Knox to Cecil, Edinburgh, 2d January, 1569-70. Endorsed by Cecil’s clerk, “Mr Knox to my Mr.”

⁶ More.

Moray despatched Elphinston on the 2d of January, and as Knox's letter was dated on the same day, and related to the same subject, it is probable he carried it with him.¹ The envoy, who was in great confidence with the regent, and a man of talent, received full instructions for his secret mission, which fortunately have been preserved. He was directed to impress upon Elizabeth, in the strongest manner, the difficulties with which Moray was surrounded; the daily increasing power of his and her enemies, who supported the cause of the captive queen both in England and Scotland; the perpetual tumults and intrigues of the Spanish faction of the Catholics in England, and their brethren of the same faith in Scotland; their intercourse with Philip of Spain and the Pope, who were animating them at that very moment to new exertions; the succours hourly looked for from France; and the utter impossibility of the regent keeping up the struggle against his opponents, if Mary was permitted to remain in England, and Elizabeth did not come forward with more prompt and effectual assistance.

It was necessary, he said, to prevent the ruin of the cause, that the Queen of England and his master should distinctly understand each other. She had lately urged him to deliver up her rebel the Earl of Northumberland, to pay the penalty of a traitor. It was a hard request, and against every feeling of honour and humanity, to surrender a banished man to slaughter; but he was ready to consent, if, in exchange, the Queen of Scots were committed into his hands, and if, at the same time, Elizabeth would support the cause of his young sovereign, and the interests of true religion, by an immediate advance of money, and a seasonable pre-

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Moray to Cecil, January 2, 1569-70.

sent of arms and ammunition.¹ If this were agreed to, then he was ready to continue his efforts for the maintenance of the government in Scotland against the machinations of their enemies: he would not only preserve her amity, but “would serve her majesty in England, as they are accustomed to do their native princes in Scotland, and out of England, upon reasonable wages.” If she would not consent to this, then he must forbear any longer to venture his life as he had done; and it would be well for her to consider what dangers might ensue to both the realms, by the increase of the factions which favoured papistry and the Queen of Scots’ title. Above all, he entreated her to remember, (alluding, as it appears to me, to the subject of Knox’s letter,) that the heads of all these troubles were at her commandment; that this late rebellion was not now ended, but had more dangerous branches, for which, if she did not provide a remedy, the fault must lie upon herself.²

These secret negotiations were detected by the vigilance of the Bishop of Ross, and he instantly presented a protest to the Queen of England against a proposition which, if agreed to, was, he said, equivalent to signing Mary’s death-warrant. He solicited also the ambassadors of France and Spain to remonstrate against it; and La Motte Fenelon addressed an earnest letter to the queen-mother upon the subject.³ Some little time, too, was gained by the refusal of the Scottish nobles to deliver up Northumberland, and Elizabeth had despatched Sir Henry Gates and the marshal of Berwick with a message to the regent, when an

¹ MS. State-paper Office, a note of the principal matters in Nicholas Elphinston’s Instructions, January 19th, 1569-70, wholly in Cecil’s hand.

² Ibid.

³ Lesley’s negotiations, p. 84. Anderson, vol. iii. Also, *Dépêches De la Motte Fenelon*, vol. ii. pp. 389, 390.

appalling event suddenly interrupted the treaty. This was the murder of Moray himself in the town of Linlithgow, by James Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh.

The assassination is to be chiefly traced to the influence of private revenge; but there is no doubt, also, that the author of the deed was the tool of a faction which had long determined on Moray's destruction. He was a gentleman of good family, had been made prisoner at Langside, and with others was condemned to death; but the regent had spared his life, and been satisfied with the forfeiture of his estate.

His wife was heiress of Woodhouselee, a small property on the river Esk, to which she had retreated, under the mistaken idea that it would be exempted from the sentence of outlawry which affected her husband's estate of Bothwellhaugh. But Bellenden the justice-clerk, a favourite of Moray's, who had obtained a grant of the escheat,¹ violently occupied the house, and barbarously turned its mistress, during a bitterly cold night, and almost in a state of nakedness, into the woods, where she was found in the morning furiously mad, and insensible to the injury which had been inflicted on her. If ever revenge could meet with sympathy, it would be in so atrocious a case as this; and from that moment Bothwellhaugh resolved upon Moray's death, accusing him as the chief author of the calamity. It is affirmed by Calderwood, that he had twice failed in his sanguinary purpose, when the Hamiltons, who had long hated the regent, encouraged him to make a third attempt, which proved successful.²

Nothing could be more deliberate than the manner in which he proceeded. Moray, who was at Stirling,

¹ The forfeited property.

² MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4735, pp. 746, 747.

intended to pass through Linlithgow, on his way to Edinburgh. In this town, and in the High Street, through which the cavalcade generally passed, was a house belonging to the archbishop, uncle to Bothwell-haugh. Here the assassin took his station in a small room, or wooden gallery, which commanded a full view of the street. To prevent his heavy footsteps being heard, for he was booted and spurred, he placed a feather bed on the floor; to secure against any chance observation of his shadow, which, had the sun broke out, might have caught the eye, he hung up a black cloth on the opposite wall; and, having barricaded the door in the front, he had a swift horse ready saddled in the stable at the back. Even here his preparations did not stop; for, observing that the gate in the wall which enclosed the garden was too low to admit a man on horseback, he removed the lintel stone, and returning to his chamber, cut, in the wooden panel immediately below the lattice window where he watched, a hole just sufficient to admit the barrel of his caliver.¹ Having taken these precautions, he loaded the piece with four bullets, and calmly awaited his victim.

The regent had received repeated warnings of his danger; and, on the morning of the murder, John Hume, an attached follower, implored him not to ride through the principal street, but pass round by the back of the town, promising to bring him to the very spot where they might seize the villain who lay in wait for him.² He agreed to take his advice; but the crowd of the common people was so great, that it became impossible for him to alter his course. The

¹ Historie of King James the Sext, p. 46.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Hunsdon to Cecil, Berwick, 20th January, 1569-70.

same cause compelled him to ride at a slow pace, so that the assassin had time to take a deliberate aim; and as he passed the fatal house, he shot him right through the lower part of the body: the bullet entering above the belt of his doublet, came out near the hipbone, and killed the horse of Arthur Douglas, who rode close beside him.¹ The very suddenness and success of this atrocious action produced a horror and confusion which favoured the murderer's escape; and, mounting his horse, with the weapon of his revenge still warm in his grasp, he was already many miles from the spot, whilst the people, infuriated at the sight of their bleeding governor, were in vain attempting to break open the door of the lodging from which the shot proceeded. A few, however, caught a sight of him as he fled, and, giving chase, observed that he took the road to Hamilton.² Here he was received in triumph by the Archbishop of St Andrews, the Lord Arbroath, of whom Bothwellhaugh was a retainer, and the whole faction of the Hamiltons. They instantly assembled in arms, declared Scotland once more free from the thraldom of an ambitious tyrant, who had been cut off at the very moment when he was plotting against the life of his sovereign; and resolved instantly to proceed to Edinburgh, to join with Grange, liberate their chief the Duke of Chastelherault, and follow up the advantage they had won.³

All these events took place with a startling rapidity, of which the slow progress of written description can

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Hunsdon to Cecil, Berwick, 24th January, 1569-70. Also, *ibid.* same to same, 26th January, 1569-70.

² *Ibid.* copy, endorsed by Hunsdon himself, Hunsdon to Elizabeth, Berwick, 30th January, 1569-70.

³ MS. State-paper Office, information anent the punishment of the regent's murder.

convey but a faint idea : in the meantime, the unhappy regent, though bleeding profusely, had strength enough to walk to the palace, where at first the surgeons gave hopes of his recovery. Mortal symptoms, however, soon appeared ; and when made acquainted with them, he received the information with his usual calm demeanour. When his friends bitterly lamented his fate, remarking, that he might long since have taken the miscreant's life, and observing that his clemency had been his ruin, Moray mildly answered, that they would never make him repent of any good he had done in his life ; and after faintly, but affectionately, commending the charge of the young prince to such of the nobility as were present, he died tranquilly a little before midnight.¹

I will not attempt any laboured character of this extraordinary man, who, coming into the possession of almost uncontrolled power, as the leader of the reformed party, when he was little more than a youth, was cut off in the midst of his greatness before he was forty years old.² Living in those wretched times, when the country was torn by two parties which mortally hated each other, he has come down to us so disfigured by the prejudices of his contemporaries, that it is difficult to discern his true features. As to his personal intrepidity, his talents for state affairs, his military capacity, and the general purity of his private life, in a corrupt age and court, there can be no difference of opinion. It has been recorded of him that he ordered himself and his family in such sort, that it did more resemble a church than a court ;³ and it is but fair to conclude that this proceeded from his deep feelings of religion,

¹ Spottiswood, p. 233.

² He was born in 1530, and slain in 1569-70.

³ Spottiswood, p. 233.

and a steady attachment to a reformation which he believed to be founded on the Word of God. But, on the other hand, there are some facts, especially such as occurred during the latter part of his career, which throw suspicion upon his motives, and weigh heavily against him. He consented to the murder of Riccio : to compass his own return to power, he unscrupulously leagued himself with men whom he knew to be the murderers of the king ; used their evidence to convict his sovereign ; and refused to turn against them till they began to threaten his power, and declined to act as the tools of his ambition. If we regard private faith and honour, how can we defend his betrayal of Norfolk, and his consent to deliver up Northumberland ? If we look to love of country, a principle now, perhaps, too lightly esteemed, but inseparable from all true greatness, what are we to think of his last ignominious offers to Elizabeth ? If we go higher still, and seek for that love which is the only test of religious truth, how difficult is it to think that it could have a place in his heart, whose last transaction went to aggravate the imprisonment, if not to recommend the death, of a miserable princess, his own sister and his sovereign.

All are agreed that he was a noble-looking personage, of grave and commanding manners. His funeral, which was a solemn spectacle, took place on the 14th of February, in the High Church of St Giles, at Edinburgh, where he was buried in St Anthony's aisle. The body had been taken from Linlithgow to Stirling, and thence was transported by water to Leith, and carried to the palace of Holyrood. In the public procession to the church it was accompanied by the magistrates and citizens of Edinburgh, who greatly lamented him : they were followed by the gentlemen of the country, and these by the nobility. The Earls of

Morton, Mar, Glencairn, and Cassillis, with the Lords Glammiss, Lindsay, Ochiltree, and Ruthven, carried the body ; before it came the Laird of Grange and Colvil of Cleish ; Grange bearing his banner, with the royal arms, and Cleish his coat armour. The servants of his household followed, making great lamentation, as Randolph, an eye-witness, wrote to Cecil. On entering the church the bier was placed before the pulpit, and Knox preached the sermon, taking for his text, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." ¹

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, Edinburgh, 22d Feb. 1569-70. Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 158.

CHAP. II.

INTERREGNUM.

REGENCIES OF LENNOX AND MAR.

1570—1572.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>England.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Germany.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Portugal.</i>	<i>Pope.</i>
Elizabeth.	Charles IX.	Maximilian II.	Philip II.	Sebastian.	Pius V.

THE death of Moray was a serious blow to Elizabeth. Its consequences threatened to unite closely the party which favoured the restoration of Mary, and were solicitous for a general pacification. The Hamiltons, Lethington, Herries, Huntley, and Argyle, had vigorously resisted the measures of the regent, and felt impatient under the ascendancy of English influence, which Moray, Morton, and their faction, had introduced. That “inestimable commodity,”¹ an English party in Scotland, which Elizabeth’s ministers described as having been so difficult to attain, and so invaluable in its effects, was now threatened with destruction; and Lord Hunsdon, the very day after Moray’s death, wrote in anxious terms, requiring the queen’s immediate attention to the state of Scotland. Important matters, he said, depended, and would fall out by this event, and much vigilance would be required to watch “the great faction which remained, who were all French.”²

¹ Anderson’s Collections, vol. iv. part i. p. 104.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Hunsdon to Cecil, Jan. 24, 1569-70.

Nor were these apprehensions exaggerated. If Elizabeth looked to her own realm, it was full of discontented subjects, and on the very eve of another rebellion. If to Scotland, Mary's adherents were in a state of high elatedness and hope ;¹ the Hamiltons had already taken arms, the castles of Edinburgh and Dunbarton were in the hands of her friends, succours had arrived in the Clyde from France ; and, on the morning after the regent's death, Scott of Buccleuch, and Ker of Fernyhirst, two of the mightiest of the border chiefs, broke into England, and in a destructive "raid" let loose their vengeance. In their company was Nevil, the banished Earl of Westmoreland, a rough soldier and devoted friend of Mary, who, as Hunsdon wrote Cecil, had testified his joy, on hearing of Moray's death, by casting his hat into the fire: replacing it, no doubt, by a steel bonnet.

All this was ground for much anxiety at home ; and the prospect was not more encouraging abroad. In France, the news of Moray's assassination produced a paroxysm of joy, and was followed by active preparations to follow up the advantage.² In Spain no less interest was felt ; and at that moment Douglas, a messenger from the Duke of Alva, employed by the Bishop of Ross, was in Scotland. He had brought letters to the friends of Mary, sewed under the buttons of his coat, had twice supplied them with money, and warmly exhorted them to keep up the contest until assistance arrived from Philip.³

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Hunsdon to Cecil, Berwick, Jan. 30, 1569-70. Also, *ibid.* information anent the punishment of the Regent's murder.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Norris to Cecil, February 17, 1569-70, Angiers. *Ibid.* Norris to Cecil, February 25, 1569-70.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Cecil, January 26, 1569-70.

These were all alarming indications ; and the papers of Elizabeth's vigilant and indefatigable minister, Cecil, contain ample proof that he was not insensible to the importance of the crisis. In an able but somewhat Machiavelian memorial on the state of the realm, drawn up on the very eve of Moray's murder, and the arguments in which were greatly strengthened by that event,¹ he stated the perils both in respect of persons and matters to be many, great, and imminent ; pointed out the increasing strength of the Romish party all over Europe ; the decay and probable extinction of the Protestant power in France and Flanders ; the weakening of all those counter forces which his mistress had hitherto been successful in raising against it ; and the well known resolution of the court of Rome, and the three great powers of Spain, Austria, and France, never to intermit their efforts until they had destroyed England, and placed its crown upon the head of the Scottish queen. In the same paper he called her attention to that unceasing encouragement to intrigue and rebellion, which was held out by Mary's presence in England, and the growing unanimity and power of her party at home.

All this, it was evident, called for immediate exertion ; and, in Cecil's opinion, there was but one way to provide a remedy, or at least to arrest the evil in its progress. Scotland was the field on which Elizabeth's domestic and foreign enemies were uniting against her : the strength of that country lay in the union of its various factions, which previous to Moray's death had been nearly accomplished by the efforts of Lethington and Grange, and which this event threatened to accelerate. Her policy, then, must be, to prevent a pacifi-

¹ Haynes, p. 579.

cation, keep up an English party, and find her own peace in the dissensions and misery of her neighbour. For this end two instruments were necessary, and must instantly be procured: the first an ambassador, who, under the mask of a peacemaker, might sow the seeds of disquiet and confusion; the second a regent, who would submit to her dictation. She found the one in Sir Thomas Randolph, an accomplished master in political intrigue, whom she despatched to Scotland only three days after the death of Moray.¹ For the second, she chose the Earl of Lennox, father of the unhappy Darnley, who had long been a pensioner upon her bounty, and whose moderate abilities and pliant disposition promised the subserviency which she wished.

Immediately after the regent's death, this nobleman had addressed a "supplication" to Elizabeth, representing the great danger in which it left the infant king, his grandson, her majesty's near kinsman, and suggesting the propriety of extending her protection to the "little innocent," by getting him delivered into her own hands.² This had been always a favourite project of the queen's, and disposed her to think favourably of Lennox; but another cause recommended him still more strongly: there had long existed a deadly hatred between the two great houses of Hamilton and Lennox, and no more effectual method to kindle a flame in Scotland could have been adopted, than the elevation of this nobleman to the first rank in the government.³

¹ MS. letter, draft, State-paper Office, entirely in Cecil's hand. Minute of the Queen's majesty's letter, 29th January, 1569-70. Melvil's Memoirs, p. 227; also, 230, 231. "He" (Randolph,) says this author, "was deliberately directed secretly to kindle a fire of discord between the two stark factions in Scotland, quhilk could not be easily quenched."

² Haynes, p. 576.

³ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 227.

In the meantime, Elizabeth received a letter from Lord Hunsdon, the governor of Berwick, which in some degree quieted her apprehensions, and gave her better hopes than he had at first held out. A week after the regent's murder, the Earl of Morton requested a meeting at Edinburgh with Sir Henry Gates and Sir William Drury, who had come to Scotland on a mission to the regent, and were in that country when he died. It was held in Gates's lodging; and there, besides Morton, the envoy met Grange, Lindsay, Sir James Balfour, Makgill the justice-clerk, Bellenden the clerk-register, with the lairds of Pitarrow and Tullibardine.

The conference was opened by Makgill, who assured the English envoys of their continued devotion to Elizabeth, and betrayed an evident terror lest she should set their queen at liberty and send her home amongst them. They spoke of an approaching convention of the nobility, but declared, that if the Queen of England would accept their services, secure their religion, and aid them to resist the intrusion of foreigners, they would run with her the same course which Moray had done, and decide on nothing till they knew her pleasure: as to a regent, her majesty would do well, they said, to think of the Earl of Lennox, a Stewart by birth, a Douglas by marriage, and at that time within her majesty's realm. If she would send him, they were ready to make him the head of their faction; and should she wish him to be accompanied by any confidential person whose advice he might use, they would gladly receive him also. In the concluding passage of Hunsdon's letter to the queen, he entreated her, when such "good stuff was offered," not to hesitate about its acceptance; adding, that if the Hamiltons were allowed to bear the chief sway, the French would

not be long absent. Lastly, he implored her to watch the Bishop of Ross, and take good heed to the Scottish queen.¹

Randolph soon after arrived in the capital, and notwithstanding the encouraging assurances of Morton and his friends, found things in an unsettled state.² Yet this was far from ungratifying to a minister who considered that the strength of his royal mistress lay in the dissensions of her neighbours. A messenger had been sent from Argyle and the Hamiltons, who warned their opponents not to acknowledge any other authority than the queen's; declaring that, as her lieutenants in Scotland,³ they were ready to punish the regent's murder, but ridiculing the idea that the whole race of Hamilton were guilty because the murderer bore their name. To this the reply was a public proclamation, interdicting any one from holding communication with that faction, under the penalty of being esteemed accomplices in their crimes. Soon after, Lethington, who till now had remained in a nominal captivity in the castle, was summoned, at his own request, before the privy council, where he pleaded his innocence of the king's murder, complained of the grievous calumnies with which his name had been loaded, and professed his readiness to stand his trial, and reply to any who dared accuse him. This, as it was well known, no one was prepared to do; and the council immediately pronounced him guiltless, reinstating him in his accustomed place and office "as a

¹ MS. letter, a copy by Hunsdon himself. State-paper Office, 30th Jan. 1569-70. Hunsdon to Elizabeth.

² He arrived on the 9th February, 1569-70.

³ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 157. MS. letter, State-paper Office, Edinburgh, 22d February, 1569-70, Randolph to Cecil. Also, MS. State-paper Office, copy, Proclamation by the Lords of the Secret Council, Feb. 1569-70.

profitable member of the commonwealth," and one who had been an excellent instrument in the "forth-setting of God's glory."¹ Of his accession to the murder there is not the slightest doubt, and as little of Morton's guilt, who on this occasion took the lead as chancellor of the kingdom. The whole transaction was an idle farce, and deceived no one: but the party required Lethington's able head, and imagined they could thus secure his assistance.

At this meeting Randolph communicated his instructions, and assured the council of his royal mistress's support, on condition that they would remain true to the principles of the late regent. For her part, he said, she would increase the rigour of Mary's confinement, and support them both with money and soldiers; from them she expected that they would watch over the young king, prevent his being carried to France, maintain religion, preserve peace, and deliver up the rebel Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland.² A convention of the whole nobility of the realm was summoned for the 4th of March, to take these offers into consideration, and proceed to the election of a regent;³ letters were written to Lennox, requesting his immediate presence; and Randolph, with an evident alacrity, recommenced his intrigues with all parties.

In the midst of this, a new rebellion broke out in the north of England. It was led by Leonard Dacres, a Roman Catholic gentleman, of noble family,⁴ bred

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 158, MS. State-paper Office, copy, endorsed by Randolph, Declaration of the Lord of Liddington's innocence of the king's murder.

² MS. draft, State-paper Office, in Cecil's hand, Minute of the Queen's majesty's Instructions given to Mr Randolph, Jan. 29, 1569-70.

³ MS. State-paper Office, endorsed by Randolph, Letters sent by the Lords for the Assembly, 17th February, 1569-70.

⁴ Second son of Lord Dacres of Gillesland.

up in the bosom of border war, who had been associated in the enterprises of Westmoreland and Northumberland, but was kept back by his friends at that time from any open demonstration. When still brooding over his projects, the law adjudged the rich family estates, of which he deemed himself the heir, to the daughters of his elder brother: and, stung with this imagined injury, he at once broke into rebellion, seized the castles of Naworth, Greystock, and other places of strength, collected three thousand men, and bid defiance to the government. It was an alarming outbreak, and greatly disturbed Elizabeth; but the flame was extinguished almost as soon as kindled, for Lord Hunsdon instantly advanced from Berwick with the best soldiers of his garrison there, and Sir John Forster, warden of the middle marches, meeting him with the border militia, they encountered the fierce insurgent on the banks of the little river Gelt, in Cumberland, and after a sanguinary battle entirely defeated him. Dacres and his brother fled into Scotland, where his presence, along with Westmoreland and Northumberland, formed a just subject of complaint and jealousy to the English queen.¹

Scotland, in the meantime, presented a melancholy spectacle: torn between two factions, one professing allegiance to the captive queen, the other supporting the king's authority; both pretending an equal desire for the peace of their country, but thwarted in every effort to accomplish it by their own ambition and the intrigues of England. Of these two parties, the friends of the captive queen were the stronger, and must soon have triumphed over their opponents, but

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Hunsdon to the Queen, 20th Feb. 1569-70. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, same to same, 27th February, 1569-70. Lingard, vol. viii. p. 60.

for the assistance given the latter by Elizabeth. They included the highest and most ancient nobility in the country: the Duke of Chastelherault and the whole power of the Hamiltons; the Earls of Argyle, Huntley, Athole, Errol, Crawford, and Marshal; Caithness, Cassillis, Sutherland, and Eglinton; the Lords Hume, Seton, Ogilvy, Ross, Borthwick, Oliphant, Yester, and Fleming; Herries, Boyd, Somerville, Innermeith, Forbes, and Gray.¹ The mere enumeration of these names shows the power of that great party in the state which now anxiously desired the restoration of the queen, and resisted the hostile dictation, whilst they still entreated the good offices, of Elizabeth. They possessed the castles of Edinburgh and Dunbarton; the first commanding the capital of the country, the second its strongest fortress, and, from its situation on the Clyde, affording a port by which foreign succours could be easily introduced into Scotland. But their chief strength lay in Kirkaldy of Grange, and Maitland of Lethington the secretary; Grange being universally reputed the bravest and most fortunate soldier, and Maitland the ablest statesman in the country.

It was generally believed that, with two such heads to direct them, Mary's party would be more than a match for their opponents. Yet these were formidable enough. Their great leader, and the soul of every measure, was the Earl of Morton, a man bred up from his infancy in the midst of civil commotion, "nusselled in war and shedding of blood," (to use a strong phrase of Cecil's,)² and so intensely selfish and ambitious, that

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Petition to Elizabeth, 16th April, 1570. Endorsed by Cecil, Duke of Chastelherault, and his Associates, to the Queen's majesty.

² Haynes' State Papers, p. 581. The phrase is applied by Cecil to the Duke of Anjou.

country, kindred, or religion, were readily trampled on in his struggle for power. His interest had made him a steady Protestant. By his professions of attachment to the Reformation, he gained the powerful support of Knox and the church, and he was completely devoted to England. His associates were Lennox, Mar the governor of the infant king, Glencairn, and Buchan, with the Lords Glamis, Ruthven, Lindsay, Cathcart, Methven, Ochiltree, and Saltoun.¹

Such was the state and strength of the two parties when Randolph returned to Scotland as ambassador from Elizabeth; and, acting under the directions of Cecil, exerted himself with such success to increase their mutual asperity, that every attempt at union or conciliation proved unsuccessful. The miserable condition of the country at this moment, has been strikingly described by Sir James Melvil, an eye-witness, and an old acquaintance of Randolph. "Now," says he, "the two furious factions being framed in this manner, the hatred and rage against each other grew daily greater. For Master Randolph knew the diversities that were among the noblemen, and the nature of every one in particular, by his oft-coming and long residence in Scotland. Among the ladies he had a mother, and a mistress, to whom he caused his queen oft send communications and tokens. He used also his craft with the ministers,² and offered gold to divers of them. One of them that was very honest, refused his gift, but he told that his companion took it as by way of charity. I am not certain if any of the rest took presents, but undoubtedly he offered to such as were in meetest rowmes,³ to cry out against factions

¹ MS. copy of the time, State-paper Office, Instructions given by the Lords of Scotland to the Commendator of Dunfermline, 1st May, 1570.

² The Clergy.

³ Offices.

here and there, and kindle the fiercer fire, so that the parties were not content to fight and shed each other's blood, but would flyte¹ with injurious and blasphemous words, and at length fell to the down-casting of each other's houses, whereunto England lent their help.

* * * Then, as Nero stood up upon a high part of Rome, to see the town burning which he had caused set on fire, so Master Randolph delighted to see such fire kindled in Scotland, and, by his writings to some in the court of England, glorified himself to have brought it to pass in such sort, that it should not be got easily slokenit² again ; which, when it came to the knowledge of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, he wrote in³ Scotland to my brother and me, and advertised us how we were handled, detesting both Master Cecil as director, and Master Randolph as executor."⁴

In such a state of things repeated attempts were made to hold that convention of the nobility which had been appointed to meet early in March ; but all proved ineffectual ; and Argyle, in a conference with Morton and Lethington at Dalkeith, bitterly reproached Randolph as the chief cause of their miseries. He appears to have taken the attack with great composure, and contented himself with writing a humorous satirical letter to Cecil, in which he amused the English secretary with a portrait of his Scottish brother. "The Lord of Lethington," said he, "is presently at Seton, to air himself before this convention. His wits are sharp enough, and his will good enough to do good, but fearful and doubtful to take matters in hand. He doubteth some thunder-clap out of the south, [an allusion to Lennox's threatened coming,] for he hath spied a cloud somewhat afar off, which, if

¹ Scold.² Extinguished with water.³ Into.⁴ Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 233, 234.

it fall in this country, wrecketh both him and all his family. * * * I doubt nothing so much of him as I do of the length of his life. He hath only his heart whole, and his stomach good, [with] an honest mind, somewhat more given to policy than to Mr Knox's preachings. His legs are clean gone, his body so weak that it sustaineth not itself, his inward parts so feeble that to endure to sneeze he cannot for annoying the whole body. To this the blessed joy of a young wife hath brought him."¹

On the day this letter was written, the populace of Edinburgh, by whom the late regent had been much beloved, were highly excited by the display, in the open street, of a black banner, on which he was painted lying dead in his bed, with his wound open; beside him the late king under the tree, as he was found in the garden of the Kirk of Field; and at his feet the little prince, kneeling and imploring God to avenge his cause. Many poems and ballads, describing Moray's assassination, and exhorting to revenge, were scattered amongst the people, and the exasperation of the two parties became daily more incurable.²

The failure of the great assembly appointed for March was followed by busy preparations. Every baron assembled his vassals; armed conventions of the king's and queen's lords, as the two rival factions were now termed, were held in various quarters; and Morton and Mar, who had been encouraged by the message from Elizabeth,³ having assembled their friends in great strength in the capital, were eagerly pressing for the return of Lennox, when the arrival of Monsieur

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Cecil, March 1, 1569-70.

² State-paper Office; printed Broad-sides, in black letter, by Lekprevik.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Mar to the Queen of England, Edinburgh, March 14, 1569-70.

Verac from the court of France gave a sudden check to their hopes.¹ He brought letters of encouragement and ample promises of succour to Mary's friends; and, as they had received similar assurances from Spain, they concentrated their whole strength, advanced to Edinburgh, consulted with Grange the governor of the castle, restored the Duke of Chastelherault and Lord Herries to liberty,² compelled Randolph to fly from the scene of his intrigues to Berwick, and summoned a general convention of the whole nobility at Linlithgow. Its declared object was to return an answer to France, and deliberate upon the best means of restoring peace to their unhappy country; at the same time they addressed a petition to Elizabeth, in which they earnestly implored her to put an end to the miserable divisions of Scotland, by restoring the Scottish queen.³

Very different thoughts, however, from peace or restoration, were then agitating the English queen. The intrigues of Norfolk; the successive northern rebellions; the flight of the disaffected into Scotland; the invasion of Buccleuch and Fernyhirst; the fact that this "raid" had been especially cruel, and that its leaders had shown a foreknowledge of Moray's death, besides the perpetual alarm in which she was kept by the dread of French intervention and Spanish intrigue, had roused her passion to so high a pitch, that she commanded Sussex,⁴ her lieutenant in the north, to advance into Scotland at the head of seven thousand men. The pretext was, to seize her rebels; the

¹ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Lethington to Leicester, 29th March, 1570. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, John Gordon to Elizabeth, Berwick, 18th April, 1570.

² Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 167.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Duke of Chastelherault and his Associates to the Queen's Majesty, written towards the end of March, 1570, despatched from Edinburgh, 16th April.

⁴ *Supra*, p. 57.

real design was, to let loose her vengeance upon the friends of Mary, to destroy the country by fire and sword, and to incite the different factions to actual hostilities.¹

On being informed of this resolution, the queen's lords exerted their utmost efforts to prevent the advance of a force which they were wholly unprepared to resist.² In England the Bishop of Ross and the French ambassador, warmly remonstrated with the queen; Lethington, too, assured Leicester that a demonstration of hostilities would infallibly compel them to combine against her; and three several envoys successively sought the camp of Sussex to deprecate his advance. But Elizabeth was much excited: Randolph, at this moment, had warned her of a conspiracy against her life, and hinted that Mary was at the bottom of it,³ whilst Morton blew the flame by accounts of the hostile activity of Lethington, the total desertion of Grange, and the warlike preparations of their opponents.

No one that knew the English queen expected that she would have the magnanimity or the humanity to arrest her arms. Under such provocation the storm burst with terrific force. Sussex, entering the beautiful district of Teviotdale and the Merse, the country of Buccleuch and Fernyhirst, destroyed at once fifty castles, or houses of strength, and three hundred villages.⁴ In a second inroad, Home castle, one of the

¹ MS. letter, draft by Cecil, State-paper Office, the Queen to Mr Randolph, 18th March, 1569-70. Melvil's *Memoirs*, p. 227.

² Copy of the time, endorsed by Cecil, State-paper Office, instructions for the Laird of Trabroun, 15th April, 1570. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, 18th April, 1570, John Gordon to the Queen's Majesty.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, 14th April, 1570. Randolph to Cecil.

⁴ Murdin, p. 769. Lesley's negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. p. 90.

strongest in the country, was invested and taken : about the same time the western border was invaded by Lord Scrope, a country particularly obnoxious as the seat of Herries and Maxwell ; and the track of the English army was marked by the flames of villages and granges, and the utter destruction of the labours of the husbandman.¹ To follow up this severity, Elizabeth despatched Lennox, her intended regent, and Sir William Drury, the marshal of Berwick, at the head of twelve hundred foot and four hundred horse. This little army included the veteran companies, called the old bands of Berwick,² and had orders to advance to the capital, and avenge the death of the regent upon the house of Hamilton.

To Lennox no more grateful commission could be intrusted ; and, making all allowance for the recollection of ancient injuries, it is difficult to regard the intensity of his vengeance without disgust. His letters addressed to Elizabeth and Cecil are unfavourable specimens of his character, full of abject expressions of implicit submission, unworthy of his country and his high rank.³ He appears to have been wretchedly poor, entirely dependent for his supplies upon the bounty of the English queen ; and although on his march a grievous sickness had brought him to the brink of the grave, his first thoughts on returning health were, as he boasted to Cecil, “ that he should soon pull the feathers out of the wings of his opponents.”⁴ This he and his colleague, the marshal of Berwick, performed very effectually ; for, having advanced to Edinburgh, and formed a junction with

¹ Spottiswood, p. 237.

² Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 176.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Lennox to Cecil, 16th April, 1570. Same to same, 27th April, 1570. Same to same, 8th May, 1570.

⁴ Ibid. April 27, 1570. Ibid. 8th May, 1570.

Morton and his friends, they dispersed the queen's faction, who were besieging the castle of Glasgow, and commenced a pitiless devastation of Clydesdale and Linlithgowshire, razing their castles, destroying their villages, and making a desert of the whole territory. In this expedition the palace of Hamilton, belonging to the Duke of Chastelherault, with his castles of Linlithgow and Kinneil, and the estates and houses of his kindred and partisans, were so completely sacked and cast down, that this noble and powerful house was reduced to the very brink of ruin.¹

Having achieved this, Lennox wrote in an elated tone to Cecil, glorying in the flight of their enemies, recommending the English to reduce Dunbarton, and imploring Elizabeth to pity his poverty and send him more money.² From Lethington the English minister received a letter in a different and more manly strain. It was his astonishment, he said, and a mystery to him, that the Queen of England had renounced the amity of a powerful party in Scotland, consisting of the best and noblest in the realm, for the friendship of a few, utterly inferior to them in degree, and whose strength he might judge of by their being only able to muster two hundred horse. In their mad attempts they had thought nothing less than that they might have carried off the ball alone, and have haled the devil without impediment: but he had thrown a stumbling-block in their way; and although they would fain make him odious in England, he trusted Leicester and Cecil would give as little heed to their aspersions as he did to their threats. Meanwhile, he was still ready to

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 177. Murdin, p. 769.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Lennox to Cecil, 17th May, 1570, Edinburgh. Ibid. The Lords to Sussex, 16th May, 1570, Edinburgh.

unite with them in all good offices, and, whatever happened, would not be Lot's wife. As for Randolph, he feared he had been but an evil instrument, and would never believe the queen could have followed the course she now adopted, if truly informed of the state of Scotland.¹

These remonstrances of Lethington were repeated and enforced in England by the French ambassador and the Bishop of Ross, and Elizabeth began to have misgivings that her severity would unite the whole country against her. She instantly wrote to Sussex, described her interview with the French ambassador, declared she had justified the expedition as well as she could, by asserting that she was only pursuing her rebels, but that she was sorry he had taken so decided a part, and would not hear of his besieging Dunbarton.² At the same time she commanded Randolph to return from Berwick to Edinburgh, and inform the two factions that, having "reasonably" chastised her rebels, she had yielded to the desire of Mary's ambassador, the Bishop of Ross, and was about to open a negotiation for her restoration to her dominions. In the meanwhile, Sussex was directed to correspond with Morton and his party. Ross repaired to Chatsworth, to deliberate with his royal mistress; and her offers for an accommodation were carried into Scotland by Lord Livingston and John Beaton. The English army then retired, and Elizabeth assured both factions of her earnest desire for the common tranquillity.³

¹ Copy, State-paper Office, Lethington to Cecil, 17th May, 1570. I have ventured to state the letter, from internal evidence, to be addressed to Cecil. It is a copy, and does not bear any superscription.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, minute by Cecil of the Queen's letter to Sussex, May 22, 1570.

³ MS. State-paper Office, draft by Cecil, Queen to the Lords of Scotland, May 31, 1570.

These transactions occupied a month, and led to no pacific result ; a matter of little surprise to those who were assured of the hollowness of the professions on the side of the English queen and Morton. The one had not the slightest intention of restoring Mary, the other deprecated such an event as absolute ruin, and having humbled his enemies, looked forward to a rich harvest of forfeiture and plunder.

A correspondence between Sussex, the leader of the late cruel invasions, and Lethington, was the only remarkable feature in the negotiations. The English earl had been a commissioner in the conferences at York ; he was familiar with the services of Moray, Lethington, and Morton, during their days of fellowship, and was selected by Elizabeth to remonstrate with Maitland on his desertion of his old friends. To his letters the secretary replied by some bitter remarks on his recent cruelties, and he exposed also the infamous conduct of the king's faction to their queen and their native country. Sussex answered, that he would be glad to know how Lethington reconciled his doings at York, when he came forward and accused his sovereign of murder, with his new zeal in her defence. "Your lordship," said he, addressing the Scottish secretary, "must call to remembrance that your queen was by you and others, then of the faction of Scotland, and not by the queen my sovereign, nor by her knowledge or assent, brought to captivity, deprived of her royal estate, to which she was by God's ordinance born lawful inheretrix, condemned in parliament, her son crowned as lawful king, the late Earl of Moray appointed by parliament to be regent, and revoked from beyond the seas ; yourself held the place of secretary to that king and state ; and after she escaped from her captivity, from the which the queen my sovereign had

by all good means sought to deliver her, and had been the only means to save her life while she continued there, yourself and your faction at that time came into England, to detect her of a number of heinous crimes, by you objected against her; to offer your proofs, which to the uttermost you produced; to seek to have her delivered into your own hands, or to bind the queen's majesty to detain her in such sort as she should never return into Scotland, and to persuade her majesty to maintain the king's authority. Now, my lord, to return to my former questions, which be but branches from those roots, and cannot be severed from them, I do desire to know by what doctrine you may think that cause to be then just, which you now think to be unjust? [how] you may think your coming into England, your detecting her of crimes by you objected, your proofs produced for that purpose, your requests delivered to the queen my sovereign to deliver her into your custody, or to promise to keep her as she return not to Scotland, and to maintain her son's authority, (then allowed always by you to be your lawful king,)—by what doctrine, I say, may ye think the causes hereof to be then just, which you now think to be unjust?

“I would be glad to admit your excuse, that you were not *of* the number that sought rigour to your queen, although you were *with* the number, if I could do it with a safe conscience. But as I will say, ‘*Non est meum accusare, aliud ago,*’ and therefore I will not enter into those particularities, so can I not make myself ignorant of what I saw openly delivered by word and writing, with a general assent of the late regent; and all that were in his company, which tended not to a short restraint of your queen's liberty, but was directly either to deliver her captive into your

own custody, or to bind the queen my sovereign to detain her in such sort as she should never after trouble the state of Scotland: wherein, if her perpetual captivity or a worse matter were meant, and not a restraint for a time, God and your own consciences, and others that dealt then with you, do know. It may be you dealt openly on the one side and secretly on the other, wherein how the queen my sovereign digested your doings I know not; but this I know well, that if her majesty would have digested that which was openly delivered unto her by the general assent of your whole company, in such sort as you all desired, devised, and earnestly (I will not say passionately) persuaded her at that time to do for her own surety, the benefit of Scotland, and the continuing of the amity between both the realms, there had been worse done to your queen than either her majesty or any subject of England that I know, whomsoever you take to be least free from passions, could be induced to think meet to be done.”¹

This cutting personal appeal, from one so intimately acquainted with the secrets of these dark transactions, was evaded by Lethington, under the plea that if he went into an exculpation, it must needs “touch more than himself,” glancing, probably, at his royal mistress; but Sussex in a former letter having assumed to himself some credit for revoking the army, the Scottish secretary observed, that they, no doubt, would need some repose after their exertions, and ironically complimented him for his activity in the pursuit of his mistress’s rebels.

“When your lordship,” said he, “writeth, that you intend to revoke her majesty’s forces, I am glad thereof

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, copy of the time, Sussex to Lethington, 29th July, 1570.

more than I was at their coming in ; and it is not amiss for their ease to have a breathing time, and some rest between one exploit and another. 'This is the third journey they have made in Scotland since your lordship came to the borders, and [you] have been so well occupied in every one of them, that it might well be said, * * they have reasonable well acquitted themselves of the duty of old enemies, and have burnt and spoiled as much ground within Scotland as any army of England did in one year, these hundred years by-past, which may suffice for a two month's work, although you do no more.' ¹

At the same time Randolph, in a letter from Berwick, to his old military friend Grange, bantered him on his acceptance of the priory of St Andrews, a rich gift, with which it was reported Mary had secured his services. "Brother William," said he, "it was indeed most wonderful unto me, when I heard that you should become a prior. That vocation agreeth not with any thing that ever I knew in you, saving for your religious life led under the cardinal's hat, when we were both students in Paris." ²

It would have been well if these little attacks and bickerings, which I have given as illustrating the character of some of the leading actors in the times, had been the only weapons resorted to during this pretended cessation of hostilities ; but such was far from being the case. On the contrary, the country presented a miserable spectacle of intestine commotion and private war, and it was in vain that all good men sighed and struggled for the restoration of order and tranquillity ; the king's authority was despised, the queen remained

¹ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Ledington to Sussex, 2d June, 1570, Dunkeld.

² Copy of the time, State-paper Office, May 1, 1570, Thomas Randolph to the Laird of Grange.

a captive, there was no regent to whom the poor could look for protection; every petty baron, even every private citizen, found himself compelled to follow a leader; and, under the cessation of agriculture and national industry, the nation was rapidly sinking into a state of pitiable weakness and bankruptcy. In the meantime, the Bishop of Ross and the Lord of Livingston, continued their negotiations for Mary;¹ Cecil and the privy council deliberated, and the poor captive, languishing under her lengthened imprisonment, refused no concession which she deemed consistent with her honour; but every effort failed, from the exasperation of the two factions.

Morton and Lennox had despatched the Abbot of Dunfermline to carry their offers to Elizabeth, and were thrown into deep anxiety by her doubtful replies.² She had stimulated them to take arms; and now, as they had experienced on former occasions, she appeared ready to abandon them, when to advance without her aid was impossible, and to recede would be absolute ruin.

In this difficulty, a decided step was necessary, and they determined to raise Lennox to the regency. It was a measure imperatively required, as the only means of giving union and vigour to their party; and, as they acted with the advice of Randolph the English ambassador, they were well assured that, although Elizabeth affected neutrality for the moment, such a step would

¹ MS. State-paper Office, B.C. minute of the queen's letter to Sussex, a draft by Cecil, July 29, 1570. Lesley's negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. p. 91.

² Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Instructions of the Lords of Scotland to the Abbot of Dunfermline, May 1, 1570. Also, copy, State-paper Office, the Lords of Scotland to the queen's majesty, Edinburgh, June 1, 1570, by the Abbot of Dunfermline. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Lennox, Morton, and the Lords to the English privy council, 24th June, 1570.

not be unacceptable to her. But in deference to her wishes for delay, they proceeded with caution. In a convention of the lords of the king's faction, held at Stirling on the 16th of June, they conferred upon Lennox the *interim* office of lieutenant-governor under the king, until the 12th of July. This choice they immediately imparted to the English queen, and earnestly entreated her advice as to the appointment of a regent.¹ Her reply was favourable: the disorders of the country now called loudly, she said, for some settled government; and whilst she disclaimed all idea of dictation, and should be satisfied with their choice wherever it fell, it appeared to her that her cousin the Earl of Lennox, whom they had already nominated their lieutenant, was likely to be more careful of the safety of the young king than any other.² Thus encouraged, a convention was held at Edinburgh on the 12th of July, in which Lennox was formally elected regent. Lethington was then in Athole; Huntley, whom Mary had invested with the office of her lieutenant-governor,³ remained at Aberdeen, concentrating the strength of the north; and the other lords who supported the queen's authority, were busily employed arming their vassals in their various districts. Of course none of these appeared at the convention; and Grange, who commanded in the castle, and might have battered to

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Lennox, Morton, and the Lords to the privy council, June 24, 1570. The names show the truth of Lethington's observations, as to the weakness of the king's party, both in the ancient nobility and in numbers, in comparison with the queen's. They are—Earls Lennox, Morton, Mar, Glencairn, Angus; Lords Glammis, Lindsay, Ruthven, Ochiltree, Borthwick, Cathcart, and Graham the Master of Montrose. Of the clergy, Robert (Pitcairn) abbot of Dunfermline, and Robert bishop of Caithness.

² Spottiswood, p. 241.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Sussex to Cecil, July 15, 1570, Alnwick.

pieces the Tolbooth, where the election of the new governor took place, treated the whole proceedings with the utmost contempt. He refused to be present, would not even hear the letter of Elizabeth read by Randolph, and issued orders that no cannon should be fired after the proclamation.¹ Upon this Sussex told Cecil, that he had written "roundly" to him; but so little impression was made by his remonstrances, that the queen's lords declared their determination to hold a parliament at Linlithgow, on the 4th of August, and publicly avowed their resolution never to acknowledge Lennox as regent.²

Both parties now prepared for war, and the new governor, aware that his only chance of success rested on the support of England, despatched Nicholas Elphinston to urge the immediate advance of Sussex with his army, and the absolute necessity of having supplies both of money and troops. Without a thousand footmen, it would be impossible for him to make head, he said, against the enemy: Huntley was moving forward to Brechin with all his force; the Hamiltons were mustering in the west; Argyle and his highlanders and islemen, were ready to break down on the lowlands; and, at the moment he wrote, Lord Herries and the Lairds of Lochinvar, Buccleuch, Fernyhirst, and Johnston, were up in arms and had begun their havock.³ These representations alarmed Elizabeth. It was her policy that the two factions should exhaust each other, but that neither should be overwhelmed, and with this view she directed Sussex to ravage the

¹ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, B.C. Sussex to Cecil, 19th July, 1570, Alnwick.

² Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Instructions by Lennox to Nicholas Elphinston, July 23d, 1570.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Lennox to Randolph, Stirling, July 31, 1570. Ibid. Instructions to Nicholas Elphinston, July 23, 1570.

west borders "very secretly," and under the cloak of chastising her rebels the Dacres, who were harboured in these quarters.¹ At the same time that she thus herself kept up the war, she publicly upbraided both parties with the ceaseless rancour of their hostilities, and, with much apparent anxiety, encouraged Lord Livingston and the Bishop of Ross, in negotiating a treaty for Mary's restoration.

But whilst nothing but professions of peace and benevolence were on her lips, Scotland was doomed to feel the consequences of such cruel and ungenerous policy in a civil war of unexampled exasperation and atrocity. To prevent any parliament being convened by the queen's lords at Linlithgow, Lennox assembled his forces, with which he joined the Earl of Morton, and advancing against Huntley, stormed the castle of Brechin, and hung up thirty-four of the garrison (officers and soldiers) before his own house.² These exploits were communicated by Randolph to Sussex, now busy with his preparations for his expedition against the west; and he informed him at the same time, that, in the negotiations then proceeding in England, the Scottish queen had, it was said, behaved with uncommon spirit. Elizabeth, before she restored her to liberty, having insisted on being put in possession of the castles of Edinburgh and Dunbarton, Mary, on the first mention of such conditions by the Bishop of Ross, indignantly declared, that the matter needed not an instant's consideration: Elizabeth might do to her what she pleased, but never should it be said, that she had brought into bondage that realm of which she was the natural princess.³

¹ Draft by Cecil, State-paper Office, July 26, 1570, Queen's majesty to Sussex.

² Copy of the time, State-paper Office, Randolph to Sussex, August 14, 1570.

³ Ibid.

Sussex, at the head of four thousand men, now burst into Annandale, and advanced in his desolating progress to Dumfries. His own letter to the Queen of England, the mediatrix between the two countries, will best describe the nature of his visit. "I repaired," said he, "with part of your majesty's forces, to Carlisle, and receiving no such answer from the Lord Herries as I expected, * * * I entered Scotland the 22d of this present, and returned thither the 28th, in which time I threw down the castles of Annand and Hoddum, belonging to the Lord Herries; the castles of Dumfries and Carleverock, belonging to the Lord Maxwell; the castles of Tynehill and Cowhill, belonging to the Lairds of Tynehill and Cowhill; the castles of Arthur Greame and Richies George Greame, ill neighbours to England and of Englishmen sworn, now Scots, and some other piles where the rebels have been maintained."¹ He observed, in a separate letter to Cecil, "that he had avoided as much as he might the burning of houses or corn, and the taking or spoiling of cattle or goods, to make the revenge appear to be for honour only;" and yet, he complacently adds, as if afraid lest his royal mistress should misunderstand his leniency, "I have not left a stone house to an ill neighbour within twenty miles of this town."² It is difficult to recount these transactions of Sussex without expressing abhorrence of the cruel and nefarious policy by which they were dictated.

This invasion was followed by an abstinence of two months, during which the negotiations for Mary's restoration were continued; but, after repeated and protracted deliberations between the commissioners

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Carlisle, 29th August, 1570, Sussex to the queen's majesty.

² Ibid. Sussex to Cecil, 29th August, 1570.

of Elizabeth, the Scottish queen, and the regent, the issue demonstrated the hollowness and insincerity of the whole transaction upon the part of the English queen, and the faction which she supported. Secretary Cecil and Sir Walter Mildmay had repaired to Mary at Chatsworth: they had proposed to her the conditions of an accommodation; and after taking the advice of her commissioners, and communicating with the King of France and the Duke of Alva,¹ whose answers she received, she had declared her acquiescence. All matters appeared to be upon the eve of a speedy arrangement; and it only remained for the English and Scottish commissioners to have a final discussion, when new demands, to which it was impossible for the Scottish queen to submit, were started by Elizabeth; and Morton for the first time declared, that his instructions were limited to a general authority to treat of the amity of the kingdoms, and that he and his colleagues had no power to receive their queen into Scotland, or to give up to Elizabeth the person of their infant sovereign.²

This declaration, Lesley, the bishop of Ross, with a pardonable warmth, characterized as an unworthy subterfuge; complained that his mistress had been deceived; and insisted that, if there was any sincerity upon the part of the English queen, the treaty for the restoration of the Queen of Scots might be terminated upon terms of perfect honour and safety.³ But the appeal was addressed to ears determined to be shut against it. Morton's conduct appears to have been the result of a previous correspondence with Cecil and Sussex; he was well assured his declaration would be nowise unacceptable to Elizabeth herself; and the

¹ Lesley's negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 109, 120, 121, 122, 123.

² Ibid. pp. 125, 127, 130, 131, 133. ³ Ibid. pp. 134, 137, 139.

result justified his expectation. The English deputies, in giving a final judgment, observed, that as the representatives of Mary, and those of the king and the regent, could not come to an agreement, they considered their commission at an end, and must break off the negotiations.¹

During all this time, the regent, although professing to observe the truce, continued a cruel persecution of his opponents, and determined to assemble a parliament in which he might let loose upon them all the vengeance of feudal forfeiture. Against this Elizabeth remonstrated, but in such measured and feeble terms that her interference produced little effect.² It was not so, however, with Sussex,—a cruel soldier, but a man of honour,—who, on hearing a report that a sentence of treason was about to pass upon Lethington, wrote this sharp letter to Randolph.

“Master Randolph,—I hear that Lethington is put to the horn, his lands and goods confiscated and seized; if it so be, it doth not accord with the good faith the queen’s majesty meant in the articles accorded between her highness and the Bishop of Ross, nor with the writing I subscribed, and therefore I have written to the regent and others in that matter. * * * And although I, for my part, be too simple to be made a minister in princes’ causes, yet truly I weigh mine own honour so much, as I will not be made a minister to subscribe to any thing wherein my good faith and true meaning should be abused to my dishonour, or any person trusting to that he shall accord in writing with me, should thereby be by fraud deceived.”³

¹ Lesley’s negotiations, Anderson, vol. iii. pp. 138, 139.

² Original draft in Cecil’s hand, State-paper Office, 25th September, 1570, minute of the queen’s majesty’s letter to Sussex.

³ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, 8th October, 1570, Sussex to Randolph. Also, Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 193.

At this moment nothing could exceed the exasperation of the two parties, who employed every method they could devise to blacken each other. The regent was branded by Huntley, the lieutenant for the queen, as a stranger and alien ; a man sworn to the service of England, supported by foreign power, and dead to every honourable and patriotic feeling. Huntley and his friends, on the other hand, were attacked as traitors to the government, enemies to religion, band-breakers, assassins of the late virtuous and godly regent, and associates in that infamous band for the murder of their sovereign, which many had seen and well remembered. They replied, that if they were guilty or cognizant of the murder, their opponents were not less so, and produced the band itself, signed by Moray the regent, amongst other names. It was answered, that this was not the *true* contract for the king's murder, which Lethington had purloined, and now produced another in its place. The disputes became public, and Randolph, who felt indignant at the attack upon his old friend the regent Moray, addressed a remarkable letter to Cecil in his defence. "Divers," said he, "since the death of the late regent, some to cover their own doings, (how wicked soever they have been,) some to advance their own cause, grounded upon never so much injustice and untruth, seek to make the late regent odious to the world, spreading, after his death, such rumours of him as they think doth make most to their advantage towards their innocency in crimes that they are burdened with, and would fain be thought guiltless of; which is not only daily done here among themselves, but spread so far abroad as they think to find any man that will give credit either to their word or writing."

He then continued, "To name such as are yet here

living, most notoriously known to have been chief consenters to the king's death, I mind not; only I will say, that the universal bruit cometh upon three or four persons, which subscribed into a 'band,' promising to concur and assist each other in doing the same. This band was kept in the castle, in a little coffer or desk, covered with green; and after the apprehension of the Scottish queen at Carberry hill, was taken out of the place where it lay by the Laird of Liddington, in presence of Mr James Balfour, then clerk of the register, and keeper of the keys where the registers are. This being a thing so notoriously known, as well by Mr James Balfour's own report as the testimony of others that have seen the same, is utterly denied to be true, and another band produced, which they allege to be it, (containing no such matter, at the which, with divers other noblemen's hands, the regent's was also,) made a long time before the band of the king's murder was made: and now [they] say, that if it can be proved by any band that they consented unto the king's death, the late regent is as guilty as they; and for testimony thereof, as I am credibly informed [they] have sent a band to be seen in England, which is either some new band made among themselves, and the late regent's hand counterfeited at the same, (which in some other causes I know hath been done,) or the old band, at which his very own hand is, containing no such matter.

"Wherefore," continued Randolph to Cecil, "knowing so much of his innocency in so horrible a crime, besides the honour of so noble and worthy a personage, so dear a friend to the queen's majesty my sovereign, I am loath that, after his death, his adversaries should, by false report, abuse the honest and godly, especially her majesty, with such writings as they may either

frame themselves, or with such reports as are altogether void of truth. With this I am bold myself to trouble your honour, and wish that the truth hereof were as well known to all other, as I am assured myself that he was never participant of the king's death, how maliciously soever he be burdened therewith." ¹

Amidst these mutual heartburnings and accusations, the party of the church, still led by Knox, warmly espoused the cause of the regent and the interests of Elizabeth. He had bitterly deplored the loss of Moray, and, aware of Mary's application for succour to the courts of Spain and France, two powers connected, in his mind, with every thing that was corrupt and idolatrous, he denounced her intrigues in the pulpit, and inveighed against her as a murderer and an adulteress, in his usual strain of passionate and personal invective. "It has been objected against me," said he, "that I have ceased to pray for my sovereign, and have used railing imprecations against her. Sovereign to me she is not, neither am I bound to pray for her in this place. My accusers, indeed, term her their sovereign, and themselves the nobility and subjects professing her obedience; but in this they confess themselves traitors, and so I am not bound to answer them. * * * As to the imprecations made against her, I have willingly confessed, that I have desired, and in my heart desire, that God of his mercy, for the comfort of his poor flock within this realm, will oppose his power to her pride, and confound her and her flatterers, and assisters in their impiety. I praise my God, he of his mercy hath not disappointed me of my just prayer, let them call it imprecation or execration, as pleases them.

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Edinburgh, 15th October, 1570, Randolph to Cecil.

It has oftener than once stricken, and shall strike in despite of man, maintain and defend her whoso list. I am farther accused," he continued, "that I speak of their sovereign (mine she is not) as that she were reprobate, affirming that she cannot repent; whereto I answer, that the accuser is a calumniator and a manifest liar, for he is never able to prove that, at any time, I have said that she could not repent; but I have said, and yet say, that pride and repentance abide not in one heart of any long continuance. What I have spoken against the adultery, against the murders, against the pride, and against the idolatry of that wicked woman, I spake not as one that entered into God's secret counsel; but being one, of God's great mercy, called to preach, according to his blessed will revealed in his Holy Word, I have oftener than once pronounced the threatenings of his law against such as have been of counsel, knowledge, assistance, or consent, that innocent blood should be shed. And this same thing I have pronounced against all and sundry that go about to maintain that wicked woman, and the band of those murderers, that they suffer not the death according to his Word, that the plague may be taken away from this land, which shall never be, so long as she and they remain unpunished, according to the sentence of God's law."¹

To enter into the minute details of that miserable civil war, by which the country was daily ravaged, and the passions of the two rival factions wrought up to the highest pitch of exasperation, would be a sad and unprofitable task. Notwithstanding some assistance in arms and money from France and Spain,² and the incessant exertions of Grange and Lethington to keep

¹ Bannatyne's Journal, pp. 109-112, inclusive.

² Historie of James the Sext, pp. 62, 64.

up the spirit of the queen's friends, it was evident that they were becoming exhausted under the long protracted struggle ; and the capture of Dunbarton castle, by the regent, which occurred at this time, gave a severe shock to their fortunes.

This exploit, for its extraordinary gallantry and success, deserves notice. The castle, as is well known, is strongly situated on a precipitous rock, which rises abruptly from the Clyde, at the confluence of the little river Leven with this noble estuary. It was commanded by Lord Fleming, who, from the beginning of the war, had kept it for the queen ; and its importance was great, not only from its strength, which made many pronounce it impregnable, but because its situation on the Clyde rendered it at all times accessible to foreign ships, which brought supplies.

Captain Crawford of Jordanhill, to whom the attack was intrusted, had been long attached to the house of Lennox. He was the same person whose evidence was so important regarding the death of Darnley, and who afterwards accused Lethington of participation in the murder, since which time he appears to have followed the profession of arms. In the enterprise he was assisted by Cunningham, commonly called the Laird of Drumwhassel, one of the bravest and most skilful officers of his time, and he had been fortunate in securing the assistance of a man named Robertson, who, having once been warder in the castle, knew every step upon the rock familiarly, and for a bribe consented to betray it.

With this man, Crawford and his company marched from Glasgow after sunset. He had sent before him a few light horse, who prevented intelligence by stopping all passengers, and arrived about midnight at Dumbuck, within a mile of the castle, where he was

joined by Drumwhassel and Captain Hume, with a hundred men. Here he explained to the soldiers the hazardous service on which they were to be employed, provided them with ropes and scaling-ladders, and advancing with silence and celerity, reached the rock, the summit of which was fortunately involved in a heavy fog, whilst the bottom was clear. But on the first attempt all was likely to be lost. The ladders lost their hold, whilst the soldiers were upon them; and had the garrison been on the alert the noise must inevitably have betrayed them. They listened, however, and all was still; again their ladders were fixed, and this time their steel hooks catching firmly in the crevices, they gained a small jutting-out ledge, where an ash tree had struck its roots, which assisted them, as they fixed their ropes to its branches, and thus speedily towed up both the ladders and the rest of their companions.

They were still, however, far from their object. They had reached but the middle of the rock, day was breaking, and when, for the second time, they placed their ladders, an extraordinary impediment occurred. One of the soldiers in ascending was seized with a fit, in which he convulsively grasped the steps so firmly, that no one could either pass him or unloose his hold. But Crawford's presence of mind suggested a ready expedient; he tied him to the ladder, turned it, and easily ascended with the rest of his men. They were now at the bottom of the wall, where the footing was narrow and precarious; but, once more fixing their ladders in the copestone, Alexander Ramsay, Crawford's ensign, with two other soldiers, stole up, and though instantly discovered on the summit by the sentinel, who gave the alarm, leapt down and slew him, sustaining the attack of three of the guard till he

was joined by Crawford and his soldiers. Their weight, and struggles to surmount it, now brought down the old wall and afforded an open breach, through which they rushed in, shouting, "a Darnley! a Darnley!" Crawford's watchword, given evidently from affection for his unfortunate master, the late king. The garrison were panic-struck, and did not attempt resistance; Fleming the governor, from long familiarity with the place, managed to escape down the face of an almost perpendicular cleft or gully in the rock, and passing through a postern, which opened upon the Clyde, threw himself into a fishing-boat and passed over to Argyleshire.¹

In this exploit the assailants did not lose a man, and of the garrison only four soldiers were slain. In the castle were taken prisoners, Hamilton the bishop of St Andrews, who was found with his mail shirt and steel cap on;² Verac the French ambassador, Fleming of Boghall, and John Hall, an English gentleman, who had fled to Scotland after Dacre's rebellion. Lady Fleming, the wife of the governor, was also taken, and treated by the regent with great courtesy, permitted to go free, and to carry off with her her plate and furniture; but Hamilton, the primate, was instantly brought to trial for the murder of the king and the late regent, condemned, hanged, and quartered, without delay. Of his being not only cognizant, but deeply implicated in both conspiracies, there seems little doubt;³ but the rapidity with which the legal proceed-

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 203. Buchanan, book xx. cap. 28 to 32. Historie of James the Sext, pp. 70, 71. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to the Privy-council, 3d April, 1571. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to the Council, 9th April, 1571.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Drury to the Council, April 9, 1571.

³ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, B.C. Lord Herries to Lord

ings were hurried over, and the feeling of personal vengeance which mingled with the solemn judgment of the law, caused many who were assured of his guilt to blame his death. The reformed clergy pointed to his fate as a judgment from heaven ; the people, who were aware of his corrupt life and profligate principles, rejoiced over it ; and this distich was fixed to the gallows on which he suffered :

*Cresce diu felix arbor, semperque vireto
Frondibus, qui nobis talia poma feras.*

The loss of Dunbarton was a severe shock to the queen's cause. It gave a death-blow to all hopes of foreign aid ; and the regent advanced to Edinburgh with the determination of holding a parliament, collecting his whole force, and at once putting an end to the struggle.¹ Grange, however, still held out the castle, keeping the citizens of the capital who favoured the king's faction in constant terror, and affording a rallying point to the queen's friends. During the late truce he had been guilty of many excesses ; and on one occasion had broken the common prison, and rescued one of his soldiers who had stabbed a gentleman in the street. It was said, also, that he had carried off at the same time a woman, suspected of being cognizant of the late regent's murder. Upon hearing of the outrage, Cecil, his old friend, recently created Lord Burghley, remonstrated in indignant terms, expressing his horror, that one in his high command, and who had in former years of their intimacy been a professor of the Gospel, should be guilty of so flagrant a contempt

Scrope, 10th April, 1571. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Lennox, regent, to Burghley, 14th May, 1571.

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Regent to Cecil, (now Lord Burghley,) Leith, 14th May, 1571.

of its dictates. The concluding portion of his letter is remarkable:—"How you will allow my plainness," said he, "I know not; but surely I should think myself guilty of blood, if I should not thoroughly dislike you; and to this I must add, that I hear, but yet am loath to believe it, that your soldiers that broke the prison have not only taken out the murderer, your man, but a woman that was there detained as guilty of the lamentable death of the last good regent.

"Alas! my lord, may this be true? and with your help may it be conceived in thought that you,—you, I mean, that was so dear to the regent, should favour his murderers in this sort. Surely, my lord, if this be true, there is provided by God some notable work of his justice to be showed upon you; and yet I trust you are not so void of God's grace: and so for mine old friendship with you, and for the avoiding of the notable slander of God's word, I heartily wish it to be untrue. * * * I pray you commend me to my Lord of Ledington, of whom I have heard such things as I dare not believe of him, and yet his deeds make me afraid of his well doing."¹

This eloquent appeal of the English minister would have been well calculated to recall Grange to his duty, had he and Lethington not been aware that there were occasions when deeds of violence, and even assassination, did not excite, in his placid temper, such extreme feelings of abhorrence.

In the meantime, Morton, Makgill, and the Abbot of Dunfermline, returned from their negotiations in England;² and, on rejoining the regent, it was determined to resume hostilities with vigour. Lennox

¹ Copy, State-paper Office, endorsed by Cecil himself, "Copy of my letter to the Laird of Grange, 10th January, 1570-1."

² 19th April.

issued a summons for the whole force of the realm to meet him at Linlithgow on the 19th of May, and Morton concentrated at Dalkeith the troops which were in regular service and pay.¹ Grange on his part was nothing intimidated. He had received money from Mary, who, although in captivity, contrived to keep a secret intercourse with her supporters; about the same time a seasonable supply of a thousand crowns, with arms and ammunition, arrived from France.² The Duke of Chastelherault joined him with three hundred horse and one hundred hagbutters. Lord Herries and Lord Maxwell entered the capital with two hundred and forty horse; Fernyhirst soon followed them; and the castle was so strong in its garrison and its fortifications, that he regarded the motions of his opponents with little anxiety.

On the 9th of May, Lennox and Morton, having united their forces, encamped at Leith, and erected a small battery on a spot called the Dow Craig,³ above the Trinity Church, with the object of commanding the Canongate, a principal street of the city. Here, whilst the cannon of the castle opened upon them, they assembled to hold their parliament, which was numerously attended, and fulminated a sentence of forfeiture against Lethington, his brother Thomas Maitland, and others of the most obnoxious of their opponents. Having hurried through these proceedings, they broke up their assembly, and abandoned the siege, whilst Grange immediately held a rival parliament in the queen's name, and attacked his enemies with their own weapons.⁴

It is impossible to conceive a more miserable

¹ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 209.

² Ibid. p. 211.

³ The Pigeon's Rock.

⁴ Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 215. Historie of James the Sext, p. 87.

spectacle than that presented at this moment by the country and the capital: the country torn and desolated by the struggles of two exasperated factions, whose passions became every day more fierce and implacable, so that the very children fought under the name of king's and queen's men;¹ the capital in a state of siege; whilst the wretched citizens, placed between the fires of the castle and the camp of the regent, were compelled to intermit their peaceful labours, and either to serve under the queen's banner, or to join Lennox, and have their property confiscated. Two hundred chose this last severe alternative, and fled to the camp at Leith, upon which Grange passionately deposed the provost and magistrates, and placed Kerr of Fernyhirst, a fierce and powerful border chief, in the civic chair, with a council of his retainers to act as bailies.²

Amid these transactions, Sir William Drury, the marshal of Berwick, had been sent by Elizabeth to open negotiations with the leaders of the two factions, and, if possible, to bring about a pacification. Such, at least, was the avowed object of his mission; but the court of England have been accused by Sir James Melvil of acting at this moment with great duplicity.³ The various ministers whom they sent into Scotland, if we may believe this writer, a man of character, and intimately acquainted with the times and the actors, were instructed to widen rather than to heal the wounds of the country; and it is certain that Drury's conferences with Kirkaldy, Morton, and Lennox, were followed by fiercer struggles than before. Nor were English intrigue, and the jealous or selfish passions of the rival factions, the only causes of the continuance

¹ Crawford, p. 179.

² Diurnal, p. 226.

³ Melvil's Memoirs, p. 240. MS. letter, State-paper Office, Morton to Elizabeth, Leith, 23d August, 1571.

of this unhappy state of things: fanaticism added her horrors to the war; and the reformed clergy, by a refusal to pray for the queen, inflamed the resentment of her friends, and gave an example of rancour to the people. Knox, their great leader, had some time before declared his determination never to acknowledge her authority, and no longer to supplicate God for her welfare.¹ On the entry of his enemies, the Hamiltons, into the capital, he had been compelled to a precipitate retreat;² but his flight was followed by more resolute measures on the part of the Kirk and the clergy, an assembly being convoked some time after at Stirling, which confirmed his judgment and reiterated their refusal.³

Grange now determined to hold a parliament in Edinburgh, whilst the regent and the king's lords resolved to assemble the three estates in Stirling. On the queen's side, sentences of forfeiture and treason were pronounced against Lennox the regent, Morton, and Mar, the Lords Lindsay, Hay, Cathcart, Glamis, Ochiltree, Makgill clerk-register, the Bishop of Orkney, and a long list of the king's faction, amounting nearly to two hundred persons.⁴ The assembly, however, which was only attended by two of the spiritual and three of the higher temporal lords, was scarcely entitled to the name of a parliament.⁵ On the other hand, their opponents, with a greater attendance of the nobility, and a more solemn state, met at Stirling. Here the young king, then an infant of five years, was

¹ *Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 225. *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 93. *Bannatyne's Journal*, p. 98.

² *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 75. *Bannatyne's Journal*, p. 118.

³ *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 80.

⁴ *Diurnal*, pp. 236, 242, 243.

⁵ *Spottiswood*, p. 256. MS. State-paper Office, August, 1571. The speech of the king in the Tolbooth.

invested in his royal robes, and carried from the palace to the parliament by his governor the Earl of Mar, where he read a speech which had been prepared for him.¹ The doom of treason was then pronounced upon the Duke of Chastelherault, the Earl of Huntley, Sir William Kirkaldy of Grange, Lord Claud Hamilton, the Abbot of Arbroath, Sir James Balfour, Robert (afterwards Sir Robert) Melvil, and many others; whilst it was determined to despatch immediately an embassy to Elizabeth, for the purpose of concluding a more intimate alliance, and assuring her of their speedy triumph over the faction of the Scottish queen.² Before the parliament separated, a slight circumstance occurred which was much talked of at the time. The little king, in a pause of the proceedings, turning to his governor, asked him, what house they were sitting in? On being answered, that it was called the parliament house, he looked up to the roof, and pointing to a small aperture which his quick eye had detected, observed, that there was a hole in that parliament. People smiled, but the superstitious declared that it augured disaster to the regent, whose death occurred only five days after,³ in an enterprise which seemed likely at first to have brought the war on Grange's side to a fortunate and glorious conclusion.

This able soldier, having learnt the insecurity with which the regent and his friends were quartered at Stirling, concluded that it would not be difficult, by a rapid night march, to surprise the city. Huntley, Lord Claud Hamilton, Buccleuch, Spens of Wormiston, one

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, John Case to Drury, Stirling, August 29, 1571.

² MS. State-paper Office, August, 1571. Persons forfeited in Scotland, Maitland, vol. ii. p. 1124. Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 245.

³ Historie of James the Sext, p. 88.

of the bravest and most successful captains who had been bred in these wars, Kerr of Fernyhirst, and two officers named Bell and Calder, were the leaders whom he selected. Their force consisted of sixty mounted hagbutters and three hundred and forty border horse; and as Bell had been born in Stirling, and knew every lane and alley, no better guide could have been chosen. This little force rode out of Edinburgh in the evening of the 3d of September, some horsemen having been previously sent to the ferry and other parts between Stirling and the capital, to arrest all passengers and prevent any information being carried there.¹ They first took the road towards Peebles, and it was reported in the enemy's camp at Leith, that they meditated an attack upon Jedburgh. Favoured by the night, however, they wheeled off in the direction of Stirling; and having left their horses about a mile from that city, entered it on foot by a secret passage in the gray of the morning, before the inhabitants were stirring. So complete was the surprise, that they occupied every street without difficulty;² broke up the noblemen's houses; and in an incredibly short time took prisoners, the regent himself, the Earls of Morton, Glencairn, Argyle, Cassillis, Eglinton, Montrose, and Buchan, with the Lords Semple, Cathcart, and Ochiltree. These were placed under a guard in their houses, and at this moment, had the borderers kept together, the victory was complete; but the Liddesdale men went to the spoil, emptied the stables of their horses, broke up the merchants' booths, encumbered themselves with booty,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, from Scotland, a spy to Lord Burghley, 5th September, 1571. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Grange and Lethington to Sir William Drury, 6th September, 1571.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Grange and Maitland to Drury, 6th September, 1571.

and dispersed in the lanes instead of watching the prisoners. It happened here, too, as is often the case in an action of this kind, that a few minutes are often invaluable. Morton, before he was taken, had blockaded his house, and refusing to surrender till it was set on fire, his resistance gave the townsmen time to recover themselves. Mar, in the meantime, rushing from the castle with forty soldiers, commenced a fire from an unfinished lodging, which still fronts the High Street, and drove Huntley and Buccleuch, with their prisoners, from the market-place to another quarter, where they were assailed by the citizens on all sides ; whilst Lennox, Morton, and the rest of the noblemen, so lately captives, snatched up such weapons as were at hand in the confusion, and soon put their enemies to flight.

In the midst of this confusion and struggle, Captain Calder, rendered furious by the disappointment, determined that the regent, at least, should not escape, and coming up behind, shot him through the back. Lennox had been made prisoner by Spens of Wormiston ; and this brave and generous man, perceiving Calder's cruel intention, threw himself between them, and received the same shot in his body, and was then hacked to pieces by the soldiers, Lennox faintly imploring them to spare one who had risked his life in his defence. Calder afterwards confessed, that he was instigated to this savage deed by Lord Claud Hamilton and Huntley, before they took the town, in revenge for the death of the Archbishop of St Andrews, whose ignominious execution the Hamiltons had sworn to visit to the uttermost upon the regent. A swift vengeance, however, overtook his assassin, for he and Bell, the chief leader of the enterprise, having fallen into the hands of the enemy, were instantly executed ;

Bell being hanged, having first been put to the torture, and Calder broke upon the wheel.¹

Buccleuch was taken, only nine of the queen's party slain, and sixteen made prisoners. The loss would have been much greater, but that the Liddesdale and Teviotdale borderers had stolen every hoof within the town, and not a horse could be found to give the chase. It was certainly, even with its half success, a daring exploit; and Grange, in a letter written a few days after, whilst he deplored the fate of the regent, could not refrain from some expressions of exultation. "In their parliament time, (said he,) when all their lords, being twenty earls and lords, spiritual and temporal, were convened in their principal strength, wherein there were above two thousand men, three hundred of ours entered among them, were masters of the town, at least for the space of three hours, might have slain the whole noblemen if they had pleased, and retired themselves in the end with a rich booty, and without any harm."² The unfortunate regent was able to keep his seat on horseback till he entered the castle of Stirling, but the first view of his wound convinced every one that it was mortal; and his own feelings telling him he had but a few hours to live, he

¹ Second examination of Bell, State-paper Office, 6th September, 1571. "George Bell * * being put to pains, declares he came running down the gate for Huntley and Claud, and cried 'shoot the regent! the traitor is coming upon us, and ye will not get him away.' Declared, also, that Claud inquired of his deponer, where is the regent? who answered again, he is down the gait, who gave commandment to him to follow, and gar slay him, and so past down and bad shoot him, as he else said. In the meantime, Warmestoun bad seek a horse to carry him away." There is also, in the State-paper Office, the examination of Captain Calder or Cadder, who confesses that he shot the regent; and before coming to Stirling, that he had received orders from Huntley and Lord Claud Hamilton, to shoot both the regent and the Earl of Morton. MS. State-paper Office, 6th September, 1571.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Burghley, Sept. 13, 1571.

begged the chief nobles to come to his bedside. Here he recommended the young king, his grandson, to their affectionate care; reminded them, that as he had been faithful to his office, and had sealed his services with his blood, so he trusted they would fill his place by a man that feared God and loved his country. For his servants, they knew he had been cut off before he could reward them, so he must leave their recompense to his friends; for himself, he would only ask their prayers; and for my poor wife Meg, said he, turning to Mar and wringing his hand, you, my lord, must remember me lovingly to her, and do your best for her comfort.¹ He died that same evening, the 4th of September, and on the succeeding day, the Earl of Mar, governor to the young king, was chosen regent. His competitors for the office were Argyle, whom Morton had induced to join the king's faction, and Morton himself, who was supported by English influence; but the majority declared for Mar, whose character for honesty in these profligate times stood higher than that of any of the nobles.²

On his accession to the supreme power, Mar confidently hoped, that by a judicious mixture of vigour and conciliation, he should be able to reduce the opposite faction, and restore peace to the country;³ but the difficulties he had to contend against were infinitely more complicated than he anticipated. On the one

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Burghley, Berwick, Sept. 10, 1571. Spottiswood, p. 257.

² Ibid. September 14. Also, Spottiswood, p. 257. In a letter of Drury's to Burghley, MS. State-paper Office, B.C. September 5, 1571, he says, speaking of Lennox's reported death, "If it be true, the queen's majesty hath received a great loss, the like in affection she will never find of a Scottish man born person."

³ Ibid. September 14, 1571. Drury gives Mar a high character, as "one of the best nature in Scotland, and wholly given to quietness and peace."

hand, Grange's position was strong, and his military resources far from being exhausted, as the regent himself soon experienced; for, after an attempt to bombard the city, first on the east side, and afterwards by a strong battery on the south, in a spot called the Pleasance, the name it still bears, he was silenced in both quarters, and forced to retire on Leith.¹ On the other hand, every attempt at negotiation was defeated by the unreasonable and overbearing conduct of Morton, who had entirely governed the late regent, and determined either to rule or to overwhelm his successor. This daring and crafty man, who was the slave of ambition, knew well that his best chance of securing the supreme power lay in keeping up the commotions of the country; and in this perfidious effort he received rather countenance than opposition from the government of England. So successful were his efforts, that for some months after Mar's accession to the regency, and during the siege of the capital, the war assumed an aspect of unexampled ferocity.

In the midst of all this misery, the supporters of the captive queen were generally successful. Mar had been compelled to abandon the siege of Edinburgh, and now sent an earnest petition for assistance from Elizabeth.² In the north, Adam Gordon of Auchendown,³ Huntley's brother, defeated the king's adherents in repeated actions, and brought the whole of the country under Mary's obedience.⁴ Gordon's talents for war

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Berwick, 9th October, 1571, Drury to Burghley. MS. letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, Berwick, November 4, 1571.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, endorsed by Cecil, Cunningham's demands, October 1, 1571.

³ Auchendown castle in Banffshire.

⁴ Historie of James the Sext, pp. 109-113, inclusive.

were of the first order, and in his character we find a singular mixture of knightly chivalry, with the ferocity of the highland freebooter. Of the first, he exhibited a striking instance at Brechin, where, after a total defeat given to the Earl of Buchan, he generously dismissed nearly two hundred prisoners, most of them gentlemen, without ransom or exchange. Of his vengeance, a dreadful example was given in his burning the castle of Towie, with its unfortunate mistress, the Lady Forbes, and her whole household, thirty-seven in number. In her husband's absence, she had undertaken its defence, and too rashly defied him from the battlements. Such a combination as that exhibited by Gordon was no unfrequent production in these dark and sanguinary times.¹

Meanwhile, in England, was discovered a new intrigue of the Duke of Norfolk for his marriage with the Scottish queen. This nobleman had been liberated from the Tower, under the most solemn promises to forsake all intercourse with Mary; but his ambition overmastered both prudence and honour, and he had again embarked deeply with the Bishop of Ross and other friends of the captive princess, in their schemes for her restoration and marriage. It was not to be expected that the English queen should again pardon so dangerous an attempt, and her animosity was roused to the highest pitch when she discovered the skill with which the plot had been carried on, its ramifications with her own Roman Catholic subjects, its favourable reception by the courts of France and Spain, and the undiminished spirit and enterprise of Mary. Norfolk

¹ *Historie of James the Sext*, pp. 97, 111. Crawford, in his *Memoirs*, p. 213, attempts to defend Gordon from the exploit, because it was executed by one of his captains named Ker; but gives no proof that it was done without Gordon's orders.

was accordingly tried and executed, the Bishop of Ross sent to the Tower, and a determined resolution embraced, and openly declared by Elizabeth, that henceforth she would forsake all thoughts of the Scottish queen's restoration, and compel a universal obedience to the government of the king her son.

To obtain this, however, she was unwilling to incur the expense of an army, or the risk of a defeat. And by her orders, Sir William Drury the marshal of Berwick, and Lord Hunsdon the governor, began a correspondence with Grange, with the object of bringing him to terms. Lord Burghley, also, after a silence of two years, sent a friendly message to Lethington, and the secretary seemed rejoiced that their intercourse was renewed. He lamented their interrupted friendship, expressed satisfaction that some seeds of love yet remained, and trusted they would still produce either flower or fruit. To go into all the history of these sad times, he said, or of his conduct in them, would be as tedious as to declare, "*Bellum Trojanum ab Ovo*;" but this he would say, that since the beginning of their acquaintance, he had revered him as a father, and followed his counsels as of the dearest friend he had. As to Drury's messages, the matters they had to treat of were such as related to honour, duty, and surety; no light subjects. They proposed, therefore, to send a special messenger to the queen's majesty, to inform her particularly of their intentions, and, in return, expected that she would grant a commission either to Drury or some other person, who should be empowered to conclude a treaty with them.¹

This high tone appears to have disgusted Elizabeth: Drury's letters led to no satisfactory result; and Lord

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Lethington to Burghley, castle of Edinburgh, 26th October, 1571.

Hunsdon, after a tedious correspondence, was equally unsuccessful. He was instructed to bring over the queen's faction either by negotiation or by force ; but when Grange discovered that he had no commission from his royal mistress to bind her by any positive agreement, he wisely rejected his offers ; and as the force of which he talked did not appear to be forthcoming, totally disregarded his threats. There is, indeed, every reason to believe that Elizabeth's chief object at this moment in the negotiations with Mary's supporters was, to ascertain their exact strength, and the practicability of reducing the kingdom under the king's obedience.¹

Meanwhile, owing to the season of the year, for winter was commencing, she determined to delay all hostilities, and permit the rival factions to exhaust each other, confident that her interest would not materially suffer by the delay. Nor were her hopes in this disappointed. For many miserable months Scotland presented a sight which might have drawn pity from the hardest heart : her sons engaged in a furious and constant butchery of each other ;² every peaceful or useful art entirely at a stand ; her agriculture, her commerce and manufactures, neglected ; nothing heard, from one end of the country to the other, but the clangour of arms and the roar of artillery ; nothing seen but villages in flames, towns beleaguered by armed men, women and children flying from the cottages where their fathers or husbands had been massacred, and even

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Berwick, 10th November, 1571, Hunsdon to the Lairds of Lethington and Grange ; and, also, copy of the time, State-paper Office, Grange and Lethington to Hunsdon, Edinburgh castle, 9th December, 1571.

² Ibid. Randolph and Drury to Leicester and Burghley, Leith, February 23, 1571-2. Also, ibid. same to Hunsdon, Leith, February 26, 1571-2. Also, MS. letter, Randolph and Drury to Lord Hunsdon, Leith, 10th April, 1572.

the pulpit and the altar surrounded by a steel-clad congregation, which listened tremblingly with their hands upon their weapons. Into all the separate facts which would support this dreadful picture I must not enter, nor would I willingly conduct my reader through the shambles of a civil war: prisoners were tortured or massacred in cold blood, or hung by forties and fifties at a time; countrymen driving their carts, or attempting to sell their stores in the city, were hanged or branded with a hot iron; women coming to market were seized and scourged; and as the punishment did not prevent repetition of the offence, one delinquent, who ventured to retail her country produce, was barbarously hanged in her own village near the city.¹ These are homely details, but they point to much intensity of national misery, and made so deep an impression, that the period, taking its name from Morton, was long after remembered as the days of the "Douglas wars."

When we consider the aggregate of human misery and guilt which such a state of things supposes, it is impossible to withhold our abhorrence at the cold-blooded policy which, for its own ends, could foster its continuance. Yet at this moment Elizabeth appears to have secured the services of Morton by a pension, and these services were wholly directed to oppose every effort made by the regent to restore peace to the country.² His principle was, never to sheath the sword till his enemies had unconditionally surrendered, and the cause of the captive queen should be rendered utterly hopeless.

¹ The village of West Edmonston. *Diurnal of Occurrents*, p. 296. *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 103.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Instruction by Morton, given to Sir William Drury to communicate to the Queen's majesty. About 28th Nov. 1571.

Such a consummation, however, seemed still distant. The efforts of Gordon in the north, and Kirkaldy and Lethington in the capital, exhibited no signs of feebleness. Even the shocking severities I have mentioned of Morton, produced little other feelings than execrations against their author; and before the middle of summer, 1572, the affairs of the queen were once more in a prosperous condition. Gordon had completely triumphed in the north;¹ her supporters were masters of the principal city and the strongest fortress in the kingdom; they had been repeatedly supplied with money, arms, and ammunition, by France and Spain, and of the continued assistance of the latter, at least, had no reason to despair.² They had defeated Lord Semple in the west; their arms, under Fernyhirst, had carried all before them in the south; it was evident, from her long delays, that the Queen of England had some invincible repugnance to send any force to bombard the castle of Edinburgh; and if she did, they were in want of nothing for their defence; whilst their garrisons of Niddry, Livingston, and Blackness,³ amply supplied them with provisions.

At this crisis, Elizabeth, who looked with alarm upon the increasing strength of her opponents, proposed a truce for two months, preparatory, as she said, to the conclusion of a general peace, on terms which should secure the honour and safety of the queen's supporters. The negotiations were managed by Sir William Drury and the French ambassador, De Croo,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Lord Hunsdon, Restalrig, 9th July, 1572.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Randolph and Drury to Lord Hunsdon, 26th February, 1571-2. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Mar to Burghley, April 30, 1572.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Drury and Randolph to Hunsdon, 17th April, 1572.

whose services, from the league recently entered into between France and England, were not so cordially given to the captive queen as on former occasions. It seems strange that so able a statesman as Lethington, and one so intimately acquainted with the duplicity of the English queen, should on this occasion have been prevailed upon to consent to a measure which ultimately proved the ruin of his mistress's cause.¹ But he and Grange had been branded by their opponents as men of blood, who had obstinately refused to give a breathing time to their bleeding and exhausted country, and to confute the aspersion they agreed to the truce. It was signed on the 30th of July, and contained an express provision, that, as soon as might be, the nobility and estates of the realm should assemble to deliberate upon a general peace. On the same day the truce was proclaimed in the capital, amid the shouts and joy of the inhabitants, and the now harmless thunder of the ordnance of the castle.

Having thus suffered themselves to be overreached by their crafty opponents, Kirkaldy and Lethington were not long allowed to be ignorant of their fatal blunder. Mar the regent was indeed sincere, but he was completely controlled by Morton. This ambitious man now ruled the council at his will: he successfully thwarted every effort to assemble the estates, or deliberate upon a general pacification; and, unfortunately for Scotland, a calamity occurred at this moment which struck all Europe with horror, and produced the most fatal effects upon any negotiations with which Mary

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Lethington and Grange to my Lord Ambassador of England, Edinburgh castle, 13th July, 1572. MS. letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Burghley, Resterwick, (Restalrig,) 18th July, 1572. Ibid. copy of the time, 30th July, 1572; Abstinence of hostility, signed by the Castilians.

and her supporters were connected.¹ This was the massacre of St Bartholomew, an event exhibiting, in dreadful reality, the result of Popish principles and intrigue; and which, though applauded in those dark times, is now happily regarded, alike by Romanists and Protestants, with unmingled feelings of execration and disgust. Five hundred Protestant gentlemen and men of rank, and about ten thousand of inferior condition, were butchered in cold blood; the greater part in the capital of France, where the king himself, it was reported, directed the assassins, looking from the windows of his palace upon the miserable victims who fled from their assailants.² In the provinces the same dreadful scenes were repeated; and when the news arrived in England, communicated by Walsingham, Elizabeth's ambassador at the court of Charles the Ninth, the suddenness of the shock electrified the whole country. Grief, pity, and indignation, shook the national mind as if it had been that of one man. When Fenelon, the French ambassador, presented himself at the palace, he found the queen and the court clad in mourning. He was received in silence; the stillness of the grave, as he himself described it, seemed to reign in the apartments; the queen, indeed, endeavoured to preserve her equanimity, and although deeply sorrowful, received him without complaint; but the courtiers, fixing their eyes on the ground, refused to notice his greeting. Instead of a palace, he seemed to have entered a chamber of death, where men were met to mourn for their dearest friends.³

But sorrow and indignation were not the only, or

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Sir William Drury to Lord Burghley, 15th September, 1572.

² Turner's Elizabeth, vol. iv. History of England, p. 322.

³ Carte, vol. iii. p. 522. Lingard, vol. viii. pp. 113, 114.

even the strongest, feelings excited on this occasion in the breast of Elizabeth. She had, indeed, recently concluded a league with France; yet this, though it restrained the outward violence, did not diminish the intensity of her feelings. Fears for her own life, and terror for the result of those dark plots which she had already repeatedly detected and severely punished, perpetually haunted her imagination, and shook even her strong and masculine mind. Of these conspiracies Mary was the centre; she was engaged in a perpetual correspondence with the court of Rome; with France, whose name could not now be uttered without calling up images of horror; with Spain, where Philip and the Duke of Alva, men hated by the Protestants, had recently lent her the most effectual assistance; and, what was more alarming to Elizabeth than all, the recent trial of Norfolk, and the confessions of the Bishop of Ross, now a prisoner in the Tower, had convinced her, that as long as the Scottish queen remained in England, the minds of her Roman Catholic subjects would be kept in perpetual agitation; that no permanent tranquillity could be reasonably expected, and that, judging by the recent excesses in France, her own life might not be secure.

It is impossible to blame such feelings or such conclusions. They were natural and inevitable; yet here let it not be forgotten, that the terrors of the English queen are to be traced to an act of flagrant injustice. She had seized and imprisoned Mary contrary to every principle of the law of nations, to the promises she had given, to the commonest feelings of humanity; and her present thorny anxieties for her life and crown were a just retribution for such conduct. Making, however, every allowance for the fears of her council and her people, and the attachment of her great minister,

Burghley, we are scarcely prepared for the calmness with which the death of the Scottish queen was recommended by the House of Commons, and strongly urged by Cecil. Elizabeth, however, would not listen to their arguments, and at last peremptorily put an end to their consultations.¹ She had already publicly declared, that there had been no sufficient evidence exhibited against Mary by those who accused her of the death of her husband; and to bring her to trial in England, or to cause her to be publicly put to death without trial, would, she felt, be equally unjust and odious. She accordingly contented herself, after the death of Norfolk, with sending Lord De la Ware, Sir R. Sadler, and Bromley her solicitor-general, to interrogate the Scottish queen regarding her political connexion with that unfortunate man, and to remonstrate against any continuation of her intrigues.² On this occasion Mary, although plunged in grief for the recent execution of the duke, was roused by the harshness of the messengers to a spirited vindication of her rights as a free princess. Some of the allegations she admitted, some she palliated, others she peremptorily denied, and the interview led, and was probably intended to lead, to no definite result.

But if Elizabeth abandoned all thoughts of bringing her royal prisoner to a public trial, and putting her to death in England, it was only to embrace a

¹ The English bishops, in answer to a question of Burghley's, had given it as their opinion, that Elizabeth might lawfully put Mary to death, and justified their sentence by reasons of Scripture taken from the Old Testament. See British Museum, Caligula, C. ii. fol. 524, and D'Ewes' Journal, p. 507. Also, Lingard, vol. viii. pp. 106-108.

² Camden, p. 442. MS. State-paper Office, papers of Mary queen of Scots. The Lord De la Ware's and the rest of the commissioners' proceedings with the Scottish queen, June 11, 1572. Also, MS. draft by Cecil, State-paper Office, minute to the Scottish queen by the Lord De la Ware, &c.

more dark and secret expedient, and what she judged a surer mode of getting rid of her hated and dangerous prisoner. The plot was an extraordinary one, and its details, upon which I now enter, are new to this part of our history.

Previous to the massacre of St Bartholomew, and after the failure of the negotiations for peace in Scotland, which were conducted by the French ambassador De Croc, and Sir William Drury, Elizabeth had resolved to send a new envoy to that country, with the object of watching over the English interests. When the dreadful news arrived from France, Burghley and Leicester pressed upon the English queen the necessity of instant attention to her safety on the side of Scotland, and Mr Henry Killigrew was selected to proceed thither.¹ He was instructed to negotiate both with Mar the regent and the opposite faction led by Lethington and Grange; to exhort both sides to observe the late truce: to give them the details of the late horrible massacre, expressing the queen's conviction that it was premeditated; and to implore them to be on their guard.

Such was his public mission, but shortly before he set out, Killigrew was informed that a far greater matter was to be intrusted to his management, that it was to be conducted with the utmost secrecy, and was known to none but Elizabeth, Leicester, and Burghley.² In an interview with the queen herself, to which none were admitted but these two lords, he received his instructions, which remain drawn up by Cecil in his own hand.³ It was explained to him,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, copy, August, 1572. Instructions to Henry Killigrew touching the troubles in Scotland, being sent thither after the great murder that was in France.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, November 23, 1572.

³ Murdin, p. 224.

that it had at last become absolutely necessary to execute the Scottish queen, and that, unless the realm were delivered of her, the life of Elizabeth was no longer safe. This might, indeed, be done in England, but for some good respects, it was thought better that she should be sent to Scotland, and delivered to the regent and his party, "to proceed with her by way of justice."¹ To accomplish this must depend, it was said, upon his skilful management. He must frame matters so, that the offer must come from them, not from the English queen. This would probably not be difficult, for they had already many times before, under the former regents, made proposals of this nature. If such an offer were again made, he was now empowered to agree to it; but it must be upon the most solemn assurance, that she should be put to death without fail, and that neither England nor Scotland should be endangered by her hereafter: for otherwise, it was added, to have her and to keep her, would be of all other ways the most dangerous.² If, however, he could contrive it so that the regent or Morton should secretly apply to some of the lords of the English council, to have her given up, now was the best time; only, it was repeated, it must be upon absolute surety that she should receive what she deserved, and that no further peril could ever possibly occur, either by her escape, or by setting her up again.

¹ Dr Robertson notices the paper in Murdin, and severely condemns this proposal of Elizabeth. This eminent writer interprets it, as if the queen had desired the Scottish regent to bring Mary to a public trial, and, if condemnation followed, to execute her. It seems to me clear, however, that the words, "*proceed with her by way of justice*," when taken with the context, can bear but one meaning, the same meaning in which Leicester employs the phrase, in his letter in the Proofs and Illustrations, No. III. — that of executing her summarily and without delay. See Dr Lingard, vol. viii. p. 118.

² Murdin, p. 224.

To make certain of this, hostages must be required by him, and those of the highest rank, that is to say, children or near kinsfolk of the regent and the Earl of Morton. Last of all, he was solemnly reminded that the queen's name must not appear in the transaction; and Elizabeth herself, in dismissing him, bade him remember that none but Leicester, Burghley, and himself, were privy to the great and delicate charge which was now laid upon him, adding a caution, that if it "came forth," or was ever known, he must answer for it. To this Killigrew replied, "that he would keep the secret as he would his life;" and immediately set out on his journey.¹

On entering Scotland, his first visit was to Tantallon, Morton's castle, where that nobleman was confined by sickness: but the ambassador received from him the strongest assurances of devotedness to the young king his sovereign, and to Elizabeth, whose interests he believed to be the same. Knox had returned again to Edinburgh, and the recent news of the massacre in France was producing the strongest excitement. On repairing to Stirling to meet the regent, he passed through the capital, and encountered there his old friend Sir James Melvil, from whom he understood something of the state of the Castilians,² as the queen's party were now called; and, in his subsequent interview with Mar, he found him expressing himself decidedly against any intimate alliance with France, and determined, so long as he had any hope of effectual assistance from England, never to connect himself with a foreign power. So far all was favourable; but it was

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, November 23, 1572.

² Castilians, so called, from their having possession of the castle. MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, September 14, 1572.

evident to Killigrew, that, without additional forces, which he well knew Elizabeth would be unwilling to send, the regent could never make himself master of the castle.

These, and similar particulars connected with his public mission, he communicated, as he had been previously instructed, to the secretary of state ; but his proceedings in the other great and secret matter touching Mary, were contained in letters addressed to Cecil and Leicester jointly, and he appears to have lost no time in entering upon it. He informed them, in a despatch on the 19th of September, that he had already “dealt with a fit instrument, and expected that the regent and the Earl of Morton would soon break their minds unto him secretly.”¹ The instrument thus selected to manage the secret and speedy execution of the unhappy Mary was Mr Nicholas Elphinston, a dependant of the late Regent Moray, and who, from an expression of Killigrew, appears to have been on a former occasion employed in a similar negotiation. Matters, however, were not expedited with that rapidity which Burghley deemed necessary ; and this minister, although assured by his agent that he could not for his life make more speed than he had done, determined to urge him forward. For this purpose he addressed to him a letter, jointly from himself and Leicester. In reading it as it still exists, in the original draft in Cecil’s hand, with its erasures and corrections, it is striking to remark the contrast between its cold and measured style, and the cruel purpose which it advocates. It was written from Windsor, and ran thus :—

“After our hearty commendations, we two have

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 365, Killigrew to Burghley, September 19, 1572.

received your several letters directed to us, whereof the last came this last night, being of the 24th of September, and as we like well the comfort you give us of the towardness in the special matter committed to you, so we do greatly long to receive from you a further motion with some earnestness, and that both moved to you and prosecuted by them of valour, as we may look for assurance to have it take effect; for when all other ways come in consideration, none appeareth more ready to be allowed here by the best, than that which you have in hand. Wherefore we earnestly require you to employ all your labours to procure that it may be both earnestly and speedily followed there, and yet also secretly, as the cause requireth: and when we think of the matter, as daily, yea hourly, we have cause to do, we see not but the same reasons that may move us to desire that it take effect, ought also to move them, and in some part the more, considering both their private sureties, their common estate, and the continuance of the religion; all which three points are in more danger from [for] them to uphold than for us. The causes thereof we doubt not but you can enlarge to them, if you see that they do not sufficiently foresee them. We suspend all our actions only upon this, and therefore you can do no greater service than to use speed.

“Your loving friends,

“W. BURGHELEY.”¹

“From Windsor, the 29th of Sept. 1572.”

In the interval between this letter and Killigrew's last despatch, the English envoy had not been idle. He had assured himself of Morton's cordial co-operation in the scheme for having Mary secretly executed; and,

¹ MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 394. This letter being a first draft by Cecil, is signed only by him.

according to the instructions received from his own court, he had availed himself of the deep and general horror occasioned by the late murders in France to excite animosity against the papists, and to convince all ranks, that, without the most determined measures of defence, their lives and their religion would fall a sacrifice to the fury of their enemies.¹ He also had seen and consulted with Knox, who, although so feeble that he could scarce stand alone, was as entire in intellect and resolute in action as ever. The picture given of this extraordinary man by Killigrew, in a letter addressed to Cecil and Leicester, written on the 6th of October, in reply to theirs of the 29th of September, is very striking. "I trust," said he, "to satisfy Morton; and as for John Knox, that thing, you may see by my despatch to Mr Secretary, is done, and doing daily: the people in general well bent to England, abhorring the fact in France, and fearing their tyranny. . John Knox (he continued) is now so feeble as scarce can he stand alone, or speak to be heard of any audience; yet doth he every Sunday cause himself to be carried to a place, where a certain number do hear him, and preacheth with the same vehemency and zeal that ever he did. He doth reverence your lordship much, and willed me once again to send you word, that he thanked God he had obtained at his hands that the gospel of Jesus Christ is truly and simply preached through Scotland, which doth so comfort him as now he desireth to be out of this miserable life. He further said, that it was not of your lordship's² that he was not a great bishop in England; but the effect

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Edinburgh, Sept. 29, 1572. Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester.

² The meaning is, I think, "that it was from no fault of your lordship's:" that is, of Burghley.

grown in Scotland, he being an instrument, doth much more satisfy him. He desired me to make his last commendations most humbly unto your lordship, and withal, that he prayed God to increase his strong spirit in you, saying, that there was never more need.”¹

It was, no doubt, by Knox’s advice that proclamation was made, on the 3d of October, for a convention of the “professors of the true religion,” to consult upon the dangers resulting from the conspiracies of the papists. To the sheet on which it was printed, there were added certain heads or articles, said to be extracts from the secret contract between the pope, the emperor, and the Kings of Spain and Portugal, for the extirpation of the Protestant faith;² and Killigrew believed that all these preliminaries would prepare the mind of the people for any extremities that might be used against their unhappy sovereign.

Meanwhile his tool, the Abbot of Dunfermline, was secretly trafficking with Morton and the regent, and so far succeeded, that on the 9th of October a conference on the proposed execution of Mary was held at Dalkeith, in Morton’s bed-chamber, he being still confined by sickness. None were present but the Regent Mar and Killigrew, who immediately communicated the result to Cecil and Leicester in the following letter:

“My singular good lords—What has past here since my last, touching the common cause, I have written to Mr Secretary at length.

“Now *for the great matter ye wot of*. At my being at Dalkeith with my lord regent’s grace, the Earl of Morton and he had conference, and both willing to do

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 370, October 6, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester.

² Broadside, State-paper Office, entitled “Proclamation for a convention of the professors of the true religion,” October 3, 1572; printed by Lekprevik, at St Andrews, A.D. 1572.

the thing you most desire ; howbeit, I could have no answer there, but that both thought it the only way and the best way to end all troubles, as it were, in both realms. They told me, notwithstanding, the matter was dangerous, and might come so to pass, as they should draw war upon their heads ; and in that case, or rather to stop that peril, they would desire her majesty should enter in league defensive, comprehending therein the cause of religion also.

“ We came,” he continued, “ to nearer terms, to wit, that her majesty should, for a certain time, pay the sum that her highness bestoweth for the keeping of her in England, to the preservation of this crown, and take the protection of the young king. All this I heard ; and said, if they thought it not profitable for them, and that, if they meant not to will me to write earnestly as their desire, I would not move my pen for the matter ; whereat the Earl of Morton raised himself in his bed, and said, that both my lord regent and he did desire it, as a sovereign salve for all their sores : howbeit, it could not be done without some manner of ceremony, and a kind of process, whereunto the noblemen must be called after a secret manner, and the clergy likewise, which would ask some time. Also, that it would be requisite her majesty should send such a convoy with the party, that in case there were people would not like of it, they might be able to keep the field ; adding, farther, that if they can bring the nobility to consent, as they hope they shall, they will not keep the prisoner three hours alive, after he come into the bounds of Scotland.¹ But I, leaving of these devices, desired to know, indeed, what they would have me write ; and it was answered, that I should know farther

¹ Sic in original.

of my lord regent's grace here. So as this morning, a little before dinner, going to take my leave of him, as he was going towards Stirling, he told me, touching that matter which was communed upon at Dalkeith, he found it very good, and the best remedy for all diseases, and willed me so to write unto your honours; nevertheless, that it was of great weight, and therefore he would advise him of the form and manner how it might best be brought to pass, and that known, he would confer more at length with me in the same. Thus took I my leave of him, and find him, indeed, more cold than Morton, and yet seemed glad and desirous to have it come to pass." ¹

Killigrew proceeded to say, in the same letter, that some were of opinion the queen could not be executed without the meeting of parliament, which might be called suddenly, and under pretence of some other business. The reason assigned was, that the Scottish queen had only been condemned as worthy of deposition on the ground of her accession to the murder of her husband; she had not yet been judged to die.² This proposition met with no encouragement from the English envoy; a clear proof that a secret and speedy death was the object desired by Elizabeth. The proposal was, as he hinted, an excuse to delay time, and to agree to it would have been to act contrary to his instructions. The conclusion of his letter I must give in his own words:—

“Although there be that do assure me that the regent hath, after a sort, moved this matter to nine of the best of their party, to wit, that it were fit to make

¹ MS. letter, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 373, 374, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 9th October, 1572.

² MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 374, 375, Killigrew to Lords Burghley and Leicester, October 9, 1572.

a humble request to the queen's majesty, to have hither the cause of all their troubles and to do, *etc.* who have consented to him, and that I am also borne in hand, that both he and the Earl of Morton do, by all dexterity, proceed in the furtherance thereof, yet can I not assure myself of any thing, because I see them so inconstant, so divided * * *. I am also told, that the hostages have been talked of, and that they shall be delivered to our men upon the fields, and the matter despatched within four hours, so as they shall not need to tarry long in our hands; but I like not their manner of dealing, and therefore leave it to your wisdom to consider if you will have me continue to give ear, and advertise [if] I shall: if not, I pray your lordships let me be called hence."¹

In this last sentence, it is impossible not to see that the emphatic "to do, et cetera"—the delivery of the Scottish hostages for the performance of the agreement upon the fields, and the "despatching the matter," that is, having the queen put to death, "within four hours," all show that both the regent and Morton had given their full consent to the proposal. Measures were to be taken to have the sentence pronounced, (if, indeed, any ceremony of a sentence was seriously contemplated,) and the execution hurried over with the utmost expedition and economy: and the only cause of delay on the part of the regent and his brother earl, was the selfish wish of making the most profit of this cruel bargain.

Four days after this, on the 13th of October, Killigrew sent another secret packet to Leicester and Burghley. He had again been at Dalkeith, and found not only Morton "very hot and earnestly bent in the

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 375, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, October 9, 1572.

matter," but "the two ministers" equally eager in the business. From the cautious manner in which the English envoy wrote, the names of these two ministers are suppressed, and in such a case conjecture is unsatisfactory. We know that Mr Nicholas Elphinston, and Pitcairn the Abbot of Dunfermline, were the instruments already employed by Morton and Killigrew in this dark negotiation, and it is possible that they are here meant. Two other facts also are certain, from a letter of the English envoy: the one, that Cecil had enjoined him to avail himself of the co-operation of the Kirk in accomplishing the objects of his negotiation; the other, that he had already consulted John Knox, who, even in "extreme debility," and, as he describes it, "with one foot in the grave," was in mind as active as ever. From a letter already quoted, we have seen his convictions of Mary's guilt, and wishes for her execution; he may, therefore, have been one of the ministers to whom allusion was made. But this is speculation; and, after all, it might be argued, that from the words of Killigrew, the matter he spoke of to Knox was not the execution of Mary, as the former private interview may have solely related to the best method of exciting the people against France and the Catholic faction in Scotland.

However this may be, the English ambassador was informed by Morton, that if Mar showed coldness, or delayed to execute the matter, it should be done without him; and he added, that as he was lieutenant-general of the whole kingdom on this side Tay, he had power to carry it into execution.¹ He hinted, however, that if Elizabeth hoped to gain this great object, she must be more cordial in her support, and

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 376, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 13th October, 1572.

more generous in her advances. Her refusal to assist them, and her coldness, had already, he said, alienated some hearts, though not his. To this Killigrew shrewdly replied, that if Morton could at this moment have given some good assurance that Mary should be executed, or, as he expressed it in his dark language, for the performance "of *the great matter*," then he might safely reckon on the Queen of England for the satisfying his desires: but he must recollect, that its accomplishment was the sole ground on which a defensive league between the two countries could be negotiated. Without it "a man could promise nothing."¹

From the ambassador's next letter, however, any anticipated coldness or disinclination on the part of Mar appears to have entirely vanished. It was written from Stirling, and informed Burghley and Leicester, that the regent, after some general observations on the subject of the peace, began to speak, "touching the great matter, wherein," said he, "I found him very earnest." "He had sent," he said, "his resolute mind to the Lord Morton by the abbot, and desired him (Killigrew) to write speedily to Burghley and Leicester, that they might further the same by all possible means, as the only salve for the cure of the great sores of the commonwealth." "I perceive," added Killigrew, "that the regent's first coldness grew rather for want of skill how to compass so great a matter, than for lack of good will to execute the same. He desired me also to write unto your honours to be suitors unto your majesty for some relief of money towards the payment of his soldiers."²

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 376, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 13th October, 1572.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 19th October, 1572, Stirling.

It is very striking, that in the midst of these dark practices, and when he had not only consented to Mary's death, but pressed that it should be speedy, Mar was himself struck with mortal sickness, and died at Stirling on the 28th of October, within ten days after his interview with the English ambassador.¹ Previous to this event, however, he and Morton had sent to Killigrew, by the Abbot of Dunfermline, the conditions on which they were ready to rid Elizabeth of her rival. They stipulated, that the Queen of England should take the young king their sovereign under her protection; they demanded a declaration from the English parliament, that his rights should not be prejudged by any sentence or process against his mother; they required that there should be a defensive league between England and Scotland; and that the Earls of Huntingdon, Bedford, or Essex, accompanied with two or three thousand of her majesty's men of war, should assist at the execution. These troops were afterwards to join the young king's forces in reducing the castle of Edinburgh. This fortress, when recovered from the enemy, was to be delivered to the regent, and all arrears then due to the Scottish forces were to be paid by England.

With these conditions Killigrew was grievously disappointed. He instantly, however, sent them by Captain Arrington, a confidential messenger, to Burghley, accompanied by a letter, in which he mentioned Mar's extreme danger, but gave some little hope of life. At the moment, however, when this was written at Edinburgh, the regent had expired at Stirling, and Burghley received the account of his death, and the "Articles of agreement, touching the great matter,"

¹ See Proofs and Illustrations, No. V. Letter of Killigrew on the death of Mar.

almost at the same instant. Although commonly of a calm and collected temper, his agitation on the present occasion seems to have been extreme. The articles themselves were such as he had little expected—the price of blood demanded by the Scottish earls was unreasonably high; and he felt indignant at Killigrew, that he should ever have received such proposals. But even if it had not been so, the death of Mar rendered it impossible to carry them into execution with the speed the necessity required; and he immediately wrote to Leicester, informing him of the total failure of their Scottish project, and emphatically remarking, that the queen must now fall back upon her last resource for the safety of herself and her kingdom. What this was, he shrunk from stating in express words, but he knew that Leicester could supply them; and there is not the slightest doubt that he alluded to the execution of Mary in England. His letter, however, is too characteristic to be omitted. It is wholly in his own hand.

“My Lord,—This bearer came to me an hour and a-h[alf] after your departure. The letters which he brought me are here included. I now see the queen’s majesty hath no surety but as she hath been counselled, for this way that was meant for dealing with Scotland is, you may see, neither now possible, nor was by their articles made reasonable. If her majesty will continue her delays, for providing for her own surety by just means given to her by God, she and we all shall vainly call upon God when the calamity shall fall upon us. God send her majesty strength of spirit to preserve God’s cause, her own life, and the lives of millions of good subjects, all which are most manifestly in danger, and that only by her delays: and so, consequently, she

shall be the cause of the overthrow of a noble crown and realm, which shall be a prey to all that can invade it. God be merciful to us."¹

Thus was Burghley and Leicester's project for Mary's secret execution by the hands of her own subjects destroyed by the death of Mar, at the moment he had consented to it; and the scheme which these cruel and unscrupulous politicians conceived themselves to have so deeply laid, on which they pondered, as Cecil owned, "daily and almost hourly," entirely discomfited and cast to the winds.

Mary in the meantime was herself unconscious of the danger she had escaped; and indeed it is worthy of observation, that so well had the English ambassador kept his counsel, and so true were the conspirators to their secret, that after a concealment of nearly three centuries, these dark intrigues, with all their ramifications, have now for the first time been made a portion of our national history.² Another base transaction stains the history of this year. During Morton's exile in England the Earl of Northumberland had been his kindest friend: Northumberland himself was now a

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iii. fol. 386, Burghley to Leicester, 3d November, 1572.

² Dr Robertson not having access to the State-paper Office, had not seen the letters of Killigrew and Burghley, which unveil this part of Mary's history. He consequently falls into the error of stating, that Mar, from his honourable feelings, instantly rejected Killigrew's proposal of bringing Mary to her trial in Scotland, pronouncing her guilty, and executing her. All subsequent historians, amongst the rest the acute and learned Lingard, have been misled by this view of the transaction. Killigrew's and Burghley's letters have at length given us the truth. No trial, it appears to me, was ever contemplated; although, to use Morton's words, "a kind of process" was to be used after a secret manner, (*supra*, p. 181;) and Mar, though at first cold in the matter, at last gave his full consent to Mary's being put to death as speedily and secretly as possible.

captive in Scotland, under the charge of Morton ; but, instead of a return of benefits, this base and avaricious man sold his unhappy prisoner to Elizabeth, who shortly after had him executed at York.¹

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, 1st May, 1572. Ibid. Mar to Hunsdon, 23d May, 1572. Also, *ibid.* Hunsdon to Burghley, 29th May, 1572. Camden, p. 445. Gonzalez, p. 376.

CHAP. III.

REGENCY OF MORTON.

1572—1574.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>England.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Germany.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Portugal.</i>	<i>Pope.</i>
Elizabeth.	Charles IX.	Maximilian II.	Philip II.	Sebastian.	Gregory XIII.

THE death of Mar, over which there hung some suspicion of poison, threw Killigrew, the English ambassador, into much perplexity;¹ and Burghley, who had received the news as early as the 3d of November, wrote on that day to Walsingham, the English ambassador at the French court, in much anxiety. "The 28th of the last," said he, "the good regent of Scotland is dead, as I think by a natural sickness, and yet the certainty is not known. This will make our causes the worse in Scotland, for I fear the conveyance away of the king; and yet there is care taken for his surety; but I can almost hope for no good, seeing our evils fall by heaps, and why the heaps fall not upon ourselves personally, I see no cause to the let thereof in ourselves. God be merciful to us."² * *

Elizabeth, who felt the importance of the event, and

¹ MS. letter, Caligula, B. viii. fol. 302, Killigrew to Leicester, begun 28th October, finished 31st October, 1572.

² MS. letter, Vespasian, F. vi. fol. 181 d. Burghley to Walsingham, 3d November, 1572.

dreaded the success of French money and intrigues in Scotland, lost not a moment in taking measures to preserve her party. She wrote to the Countess of Mar, recommending her to watch over the safety of the young prince, her dear relative, in whose welfare she took the deepest interest; and she sent a flattering letter to the Earl of Morton, in which, with unusual condescension, she addressed him as if already regent, calling him her well-beloved cousin, commending the wisdom with which he had governed himself in times past, in seasons of great difficulty, and expressing her hope that he and the nobility would take measures for the safety of the young king and the repose of the realm. For more particulars she referred him to Killigrew, her ambassador; and alluding to the necessity of appointing a new regent, trusted that the election would not disturb the quiet of the country.¹

These were politic steps, as Morton was undoubtedly at this time the most able and powerful of the nobility. Even under Mar he had regulated every public measure; and when it was certain that the regent was on his death-bed, the whole administration of affairs seems naturally to have devolved on him.² He was supported by the great majority of the nobles, by the influential party of the church, and by the friendship of England. Against such influence the Castilians and their friends could do little; and after a feeble opposition, he was chosen regent in a parliament held at Edinburgh on the 24th of November, and proclaimed next day with the usual solemnity.³

¹ Copy, State-paper Office, Elizabeth to Morton, 4th Nov. 1572.

² MS. letter, Caligula, B. viii. fol. 300. Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 29th October, 1572.

³ Copy, State-paper Office, Killigrew to the Queen, 2d Dec. 1572. See MS. State-paper Office, 19th Nov. 1572, Noblemen, and others, met at the convention in Edinburgh.

At this parliament Elizabeth's letters to the Scottish nobility were publicly read; and although these were not so decided in their language as her partisans had desired, there can be little doubt that the knowledge of her favour to Morton produced the greatest influence. On informing his royal mistress, and her minister Burghley, of the late events, Killigrew earnestly advised some more effectual assistance to be sent to the new regent. He had in vain endeavoured to induce the two factions to refer their controversies to Elizabeth. The Castilians were still confident in the strength of their fortress, and looked to speedy aid from France; Morton, on the other hand, although he admitted the desirableness of peace, had invariably asserted, that to storm the castle and utterly subdue the king's enemies would be the only means to establish a firm government, and restore security alike to Scotland and England. But it was evident that this could not be done without some effectual assistance. The regent and the nobles were too poor to maintain any sufficient body of troops on their own resources, and the danger seemed to be, that if not supported by Elizabeth, they would look to France.

"This regent," said Killigrew, in his letter to Burghley, "is a shrewd fellow; and I fear little Douglas be not come home out of France without some offers to him among others; howbeit, hitherto, I can perceive nothing at all, for he assureth me still to run the course of England as much as ever regent did. Notwithstanding I see not how he can make war till the parliament be ended, though he had aid of money, and that for two reasons: the one, the parliament is appointed in this town, which cannot well be holden, because of the castle, if it were war, and the parliament must of necessity be holden for many weighty

reasons; the other is the regent's indisposition, as he is not like to travel for a month or two, but rather to keep his bed or chamber under the surgeon's care, for a disease that hath much troubled him this five or six years."¹

A few days after the despatch of this letter, Killigrew made a rapid journey to Berwick to hold a conference with Sir William Drury on Scottish matters, and obtain his advice and assistance. He was recalled suddenly, however, to Edinburgh, by a report of Morton's extreme danger, but found him much recovered, and soon after had the satisfaction of receiving an assurance from England, that the queen had determined to give effective support to the new regent both in money and troops.² Of the money, part was instantly paid down; and, by Elizabeth's directions, two skilful engineers, Johnson and Fleming, repaired to Edinburgh and examined the strength of the castle. They reported that, with a proper force and battering trains, it might be taken in twenty days; and it was resolved, as soon as the season of the year permitted, to begin the siege.

It was in the midst of these transactions, and on the very day on which Morton was chosen regent, that the celebrated reformer Knox died, in his house at Edinburgh.³ He was scarcely to be called an aged man, not having completed his sixty-seventh year; but his life had been an incessant scene of theological and political warfare, and his ardent and restless intellect

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, Dec. 10, 1572, Edinburgh.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Sir William Drury to Burghley, 21st December, 1572. Great secrecy was to be used in the delivery of the money to Morton. The sum was £2500, to be defrayed in extraordinary causes. Original, State-paper Office, B.C. Sir Valentine Brown to Lord Burghley, 26th December, 1572.

³ Bannatyne's Memorials, p. 280.

had worn out a frame which at no period had been a strong one.

There is perhaps no juster test of a great man than the impression which he has left, or the changes he has wrought upon his age ; and, under this view, none is more entitled to this appellation than Knox, who has been deservedly regarded as the father of the Reformation in Scotland. The history of his life is indeed little else than the history of this great religious revolution ; and none can deny him the praise of courage, integrity, and indefatigable exertion in proclaiming that system of truth which he believed to be founded upon the Word of God. To this he was faithful to the last ; and although it appears to me, that on many occasions he acted upon the principle, (so manifestly erroneous and anti-Christian,) that the end justified the means, on no one occasion do we find him influenced by selfish or venal motives. In this respect he stands alone, and pre-eminent over all men with whom he laboured. To extirpate a system which in its every part he believed to be false and idolatrous, and to replace it by another of which he was as firmly persuaded that it was the work of God, seems to have been the master passion of his mind. In the accomplishment of this, none who has studied the history of the times, or his own writings, will deny that he was often fierce, unrelenting, and unscrupulous ; but he was also disinterested, upright, and sincere. He neither feared nor flattered the great ; the pomp of the mitre, or the revenues of the wealthiest diocese, had no attractions in his eyes ; and there cannot be a doubt of his sincerity, when, in his last message to his old and long-tried friend, Lord Burghley, he assured him, that he counted it higher honour to have been made the instrument that the gospel was simply and truly

preached in his native country than to have been the highest prelate in England.

During his last illness, his time was wholly occupied in offices of devotion, and in receiving the visits of a few religious friends, who affectionately assisted his family in the attendance which his feeble and helpless condition required. A few days before his death, he sent for Mr David Lindsay, Mr James Lawson, and the elders and deacons of the church,¹ and raising himself in his bed, addressed them in these solemn words: "The time is approaching for which I have long thirsted, wherein I shall be relieved of all cares, and be with my Saviour Christ for ever. And now God is my witness, whom I have served with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that I have taught nothing but the true and solid doctrine of the gospel; and that the end I proposed in all my preaching, was to instruct the ignorant, to confirm the weak, to comfort the consciences of those who were humbled under the sense of their sins; and bear down, with the threatenings of God's judgments, such as were proud and rebellious. I am not ignorant that many have blamed, and yet do blame, my too great rigour and severity; but God knows, that in my heart I never hated the persons of those against whom I thundered God's judgments. I did only hate their sins, and laboured at all my power to gain them to Christ. That I forbore none of whatsoever condition, I did it out of the fear of my God, who had placed me in the function of the ministry, and I knew would bring me to an account. Now, brethren, for yourselves, I have no more to say, but that you take heed to the flock over whom God hath placed you overseers, and whom he

¹ Bannatyne's Memorials, pp. 264, 283.

hath redeemed by the blood of his only begotten Son. And you, Mr Lawson, [this was his successor,] fight a good fight. Do the work of the Lord with courage and with a willing mind; and God from above bless you and the church whereof you have the charge: against it, so long as it continueth in the doctrine of truth, the gates of hell shall not prevail.”¹

During his illness he continued to exhibit all his wonted interest in public affairs, often bewailed the defection of Grange, one of his oldest friends, and sent a message to him which at the time was regarded as almost prophetic. “Go,” said he, addressing Lindsay the minister of Leith, “to yonder man in the castle, whom you know I have loved so dearly, and tell him that I have sent you yet once more to warn him, in the name of God, to leave that evil cause. * * * Neither the craggy rock in which he miserably confides, nor the carnal prudence of that man [meaning the Secretary Lethington] whom he esteems a demi-god, nor the assistance of strangers, shall preserve him; but he shall be disgracefully dragged from his nest to punishment, and hung on a gallows against the face of the sun, unless he speedily amend his life and flee to the mercy of God.”²

It appears to me, that in this and other similar predictions, the dying Reformer, who was not only intimately acquainted with, but personally engaged in, the secret correspondence between his party and England, availed himself of this knowledge to fulminate his threats and warnings, which he knew the advance of the English army was so soon likely to fulfil.

During this time his weakness rapidly increased, and on Friday the 21st of November, he desired his coffin

¹ Spottiswood, pp. 265, 266. Bannatyne's Memorials, p. 283.

² M'Crie's Life, by Crichton, pp. 300, 302. Melvil's Diary, p. 27.

to be made. The succeeding Saturday and Sunday were spent by him almost uninterruptedly in meditation and prayer, in pious ejaculations, and earnest advices addressed to his family and friends. On Monday the 24th these sacred exercises were resumed till he was exhausted and fell into a slumber, from which he awoke to have the evening prayers read to him. "About eleven o'clock [I use the words of his excellent biographer] he gave a deep sigh, and said, 'Now, it is come;' upon which Richard Bannatyne, his faithful servant and secretary, drew near, and desired him to think of those comfortable promises of our Saviour Christ which he had so often declared to others; and perceiving that he was speechless, requested him to give them a sign that he heard them, and died in peace. Upon this he lifted up one of his hands, and sighing twice, expired without a struggle."¹ The Reformer was twice married. By his first wife, Mrs Marjory Bowes, he left two sons, Nathanael and Eleazer, who were educated in England, and both died without issue: it is remarkable that Eleazer entered the English church. By his second marriage, with Margaret Stewart the daughter of Lord Ochiltree, he left three daughters, Martha, Margaret, and Elizabeth, all of whom married, but the research of his able biographer has not detected any descendants.²

The death of Knox was followed by the complete recovery of Morton and the renewal of the war, after a vain attempt to prolong the truce.³ But although hostilities recommenced, a parliament assembled in the capital, the house where it met being protected from the fire of the castle by a bulwark; and in this, after

¹ M'Crie's Life, by Crichton, p. 309. Bannatyne, p. 289.

² Life of Knox, pp. 326, 327.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Jan. 1, 1572-3, Killigrew to Burghley.

the election of the regent had been confirmed by the three estates, all measures adopted since the coronation of the young king were ratified, and every proceeding that had been conducted in the name of the captive queen declared invalid and treasonable. Measures, also, were taken to urge forward a reconciliation between the regent and such of the nobility as had not yet acceded to his government. Of these the greatest were the Duke of Chastelherault, the whole of the Hamiltons, Argyle, Huntley, and his gallant brother Sir Adam Gordon, who still maintained his ascendancy in the north. With a view to facilitate an accommodation, it was secretly resolved, that for the present no inquiry into the murder of the late king should take place, nor any prosecution be instituted against such persons as were suspected of this crime. The regent was also empowered to pardon all persons accessory to the death of the Earl of Lennox.¹

The object of all this was quite apparent. Morton himself, Huntley, Argyle, and Sir James Balfour, (who had lately deserted his friends in the castle,) were all of them concerned in the murder of Darnley; whilst the assassination of Lennox, the late regent, was as certainly the work of the Hamiltons. Any resolution to prosecute the perpetrators of either crime must have at once put an end to the hopes of a reconciliation, and it was determined for the present to say and do nothing upon either subject.²

During the first sitting of the parliament Killigrew was absent at Berwick, whither he had gone for the purpose of consulting with Sir William Drury and

¹ *Supra*, p. 161.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Jan. 26. 1572-3. Notes and titles of Acts as were passed in the parliament began at Edinburgh, Jan. 15, 1572.

expediting the preparations for the approaching siege of the castle. Before his departure, however, he had a meeting with Nicholas Elphinston on the "great matter," or, to speak more plainly, the secret project for having Mary executed,—a subject which, although interrupted by Mar's decease, appears to have been resumed on the election of Morton. It seemed, however, that this dark design of Elizabeth, by which she hoped to rid herself of her enemy without her hand appearing in the transaction, was invariably destined to be thwarted. We have just seen, that, for the security of Huntley, Argyle, and the regent himself, it had been resolved to accuse no person of the murder, and the same prudent considerations made it expedient, at this moment, to say and do nothing against the queen. In a letter addressed at this time by Elphinston to Killigrew, this is clearly explained. "The other matter," said he, "I doubt not, you know perfectly well, cannot nor may not at this time be touched, because presently the murder may not be spoken of, seeing some suspected thereof to be in terms of appointment, as I shall at meeting cause you more clearly to understand; but of this matter I trust hereafter shortly to see a good beginning."¹

In this parliament a conference took place between the Kirk and certain commissioners appointed by the three estates, in which an important ecclesiastical measure was carried. This was the confirmation of that order for the election of bishops, which had been drawn up in the Book of Discipline, devised at Leith many years before. The change amounted to nothing less than the establishment of Episcopacy in the Scottish church. It was decided, that the title and office

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, N. Elphinston to Killigrew, January 17, 1572-3.

of archbishop and bishop should be continued as in the time which preceded the Reformation, and that a spiritual jurisdiction should be exercised by the bishops in their respective dioceses. It was determined that all abbots, priors, and other inferior prelates who were presented to benefices, should be tried by the bishop, or superintendent of the diocese, concerning their fitness to represent the church in parliament, and that to such bishopricks as were presently void, or which should become vacant, the king and regent should take care to recommend qualified persons, whose election should be made by the chapters of their cathedral churches. It was also ordered, that all benefices with cure under prelacies should be disposed of to ministers, who should receive ordination from the bishop of the diocese, upon their taking an oath to recognise the authority of the king, and to pay canonical obedience to their ordinary.¹

In the midst of these proceedings Killigrew returned to Edinburgh, and on the succeeding day was admitted to an audience of the parliament. The message which he delivered, and the assurances he conveyed of the determination of his royal mistress to protect the young king and support the government of the regent,

¹ Spottiswood, p. 260. — Mr David Lindsay, a minister and commissioner, communicated these important measures to Killigrew in a letter written during the sitting of the conference, and when the guns of the castle were thundering in their ears. Its concluding sentence is worthy of notice, as it seems to show that Killigrew had still in view such measures as he judged necessary for the prosecution of the "*great matter*" confided to him. "The article which your lordship desired me to remember, touching the murder, is not like to pass, lest it should hold back some that are willing to come to composition. I cannot tell how long the parliament shall last, but I suppose all will be ended this next Wednesday at the farthest. This day the castle has declared their ill will with great shooting and little harm." * * MS. letter, State-paper Office, David Lindsay to Mr Killigrew, Leith, 16th January, 1572-3.

produced an immediate effect; and a convention for a general pacification was soon after held at Perth, between commissioners appointed by the regent on the one side, and Huntley and the Lord of Arbroath, as the representative of the Duke of Chastelherault, on the other. It was attended by the English ambassador, in whose lodging the conferences took place, and who exerted himself so successfully to compose all subjects of difference, that at last a complete reconciliation was effected. "And now," said the successful diplomatist to Lord Burghley, "there remaineth but the castle to make the king universally obeyed, and this realm united, which, peradventure, may be done without force after the accord; notwithstanding, in my simple opinion, which I submit unto your honour's wisdom, it standeth with more reason and policy for her majesty to hasten the aid rather now than before this conference. I mean, so that it may be ready, if need require, to execute; otherwise not."¹

At this moment, the fortunes of the Castilians (so Grange and the queen's party were called) seemed reduced to the lowest ebb, and disaster after disaster threatened to bring total ruin upon their cause. Verac, who had been commissioned to bring them relief from the French king, was driven by a tempest into Scarborough, and detained in England. Sir James Kirkaldy, Grange's brother, who had landed at the castle of Blackness, with a large supply of money, arms, and military stores, was betrayed and seized; whilst the castle itself fell into the hands of the regent.² The example of Huntley and the Hamiltons,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, 18th Feb. 1572, Killigrew to Burghley.

² *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 127. It was betrayed to the enemy by the treachery of the wife of Sir James Kirkaldy.

in acceding to the king's authority, was speedily followed by the submission of the Lords Gray, Oliphant, the Sheriff of Ayr, and the Lairds of Buccleuch and Johnston; whilst in the north Huntley undertook to bring over to terms his gallant brother, Sir Adam Gordon, who, during the conferences at Perth, had surprised and routed the king's adherents at Aberdeen. With this view the indefatigable Killigrew had hurried from Perth to the capital, where he obtained the regent's signature to the articles of pacification.¹

Even under all these gloomy appearances, the spirit of Grange was unbroken, and the resources of Lethington undiminished. A long experience of the parsimony of Elizabeth had persuaded them that she would never submit to the expense of sending an army and a battering train into Scotland. They looked with confidence to the arrival of assistance from France, and trusted that, even if long delayed, the strength of their walls would still bid defiance to the enemy.²

For a brief season these sanguine anticipations seemed to be realized; and the Queen of England, at the moment when Burghley imagined he had convinced her of the necessity of sending her forces into Scotland, began to waver. She dreaded bringing on a war with France; represented to her council the great expense and hazard of the siege; and asserted that Morton ought to be able to reduce it without her assistance. Killigrew was in despair. He wrote instantly, that if the expedition were abandoned, Scotland would be lost to them, and as surely united

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, February 23, 1572-3. "God so blessed this treaty, as this day, being the 23d aforenoon, the Articles of Accord and Pacification were signed."

² Copy of the time, State-paper Office, 23d February, 1572-3. Lord Lethington and Grange to the Earl of Huntley.

in a league with France. Every thing, he contended, proved this. Lord Seton had been already negotiating with the regent to win him to France. What had been Verac's late commission? To corrupt the garrison of Dunbarton, to bribe the governors of the young king, and to convey him out of Scotland. What was Stephen Wilson's message out of France, when he was lately seized, and his letters to the captain of the castle of Edinburgh intercepted? Did he not bring assurances from the French king and the Bishop of Glasgow, Mary's ambassador in Paris; and had he not confessed the pope's designs, and that of the rest of the Romish league, to be mainly directed against England and Scotland? Nay, were not the papal coffers already unlocked, and the man's name known who was shortly to bring the money, and begin the attack? And would her majesty shut her eyes to all this, and this too at the very crisis when a decided effort, and no very great sum, might enable her to confound these plans and secure her ground in Scotland? Would she countermand her army, and abandon the advantages which were within her reach, or rather which she had already secured? "If so," said the ambassador, in the end of an eloquent letter to Burghley, "God's will be done. For mine own part, if this castle be not recovered, and that with expedition, I see, methinks, the beginning of sorrows, and her majesty's peaceable reign hitherto, decaying as it were in post, which God of his mercy defend. The reasons be so apparent, as I need not to trouble your honour with them, whose shoulders, next her majesty's, shall not carry the least burthen, and therefore I pray God send you strength to overcome."¹

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, 9th March, 1572-3, Killigrew to Burghley.

These arguments produced the desired effect; Elizabeth's parsimonious fears gave way under the alarming arguments of her ambassador; and orders were despatched to Sir William Drury, who had been chosen to command the enterprise, to have every thing in readiness for the march of the army and the transport of the cannon at a moment's notice. A last attempt to bring the Castilians to terms was now made by the Earl of Rothes; but it led to no result. Kirkaldy and Lethington declared that, though deserted by all their friends, they would keep the castle to the last; and on the 25th of April, the English army, consisting of five hundred hagbutters, and a hundred and forty pikemen, entered the capital. They were joined by seven hundred soldiers of the regent; and the battering train having at the same time arrived by sea, the operations of the siege commenced.

In the midst of these martial transactions, the regent assembled a parliament, which confirmed the league with England, ratified the late pacification, restored Huntley and Sir James Balfour to their estates and honours, and pronounced a sentence of treason and forfeiture against the Castilians. A summons of surrender was then sent to Grange in the name of Morton and of the English general,¹ and operations for the undermining the "Spur," or blockhouse, and erecting the batteries on the principal spots which commanded the walls, proceeded with little interruption from the besieged. Their obstinacy, indeed, was surprising, and can only be accounted for by the extraordinary

¹ Copy, State-paper Office, April 25, 1573, Sir W. Drury's Summons. Also, *ibid.* the Regent's Summons, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, April 27, 1573. Also, MS. *ibid.* Acts of the Parliament, 30th April, 1573.

influence which Lethington possessed, and his fatal conviction that succours would yet arrive from France. His power over Kirkaldy was described by Killigrew as something like enchantment; and although Robert Melvil, Pitarrow, and other leading men, would fain have come to terms; though they argued that their powder and ammunition were exhausted, their victuals and supply of water on the point of failing, and their distress increasing every moment; still the governor declared he would hold the castle till he was buried in its ruins.

On the 2d of May, Killigrew, who himself assisted in the trenches, wrote thus to Burghley. "Yesterday I did advertise your honour of the end of the parliament. This day, Sir Henry Ley, with his company, dined with the regent; and upon Monday, the 4th of this month, the general doth intend to begin to plant his batteries. They within make good show, and fortify continually to frustrate the first battery, although the regent and others here be of opinion, that they will never abide the extremity. Their water will soon be taken from them when the ordnance shall be laid both within and without. Hope of succour there is none, and therefore their obstinacy must needs be vain. I send your lordship the roll of their names within, both tag and rag; and, as I am informed, eighteen of the best of them would fain be out."¹ All such hopes of escape, however, were now utterly vain, for Drury perceived his advantage, and Morton had determined to receive nothing but an unconditional surrender. In England, the result of the siege was regarded with deep interest, and many young cavaliers, amongst whom was Thomas Cecil, Burghley's eldest

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, 2d May, 1573, Killigrew to Burghley.

son, repaired from the English court to join the army and work in the trenches.

On the 17th of May the batteries were completed, and, beginning to play upon the principal bastion, named David's Tower, were answered by a long and loud shriek from the women in the castle, which was distinctly heard in the English camp. "This day," (17th May), said Killigrew in one of his journal letters to Burghley, "at one of the clock in the afternoon, some of our pieces began to speak such language as it made both them in the castle, I am sure, think more of God than they did before; and all our men, and a great many others, think the enterprise not so hard as before they took it to be. * * I trust, to be short, that after the battery shall be outlaid, which, as they say, will be ready by the twenty-first of this month, the matter will be at a point before the end of the same. * * Thanks be to God, although it be longsome, it hath hitherto been with the least blood that ever was heard in such a case; and this conjecture we have to lead us, that they want store of powder within, for they have suffered us to plant all the ordnance, and to shoot yesterday, all the afternoon, without any harm from them."¹ * *

From this time till the 23d, the cannon played incessantly upon the castle, the guns of the garrison were silenced, and in the afternoon of that day the southern wall of David's Tower fell with a great crash; next day its east quarter, the portcullis and an outer bastion named Wallace Tower, were beaten down; and on the 26th, the English, with little resis-

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Edinburgh, Killigrew to Burghley, 17th May, 1573. Also, Drury to Burghley, 18th May, 1573. "After the first tyre of ordnance great cries and shouts was made by the women of the castle, terming the day and hour black."

tance, stormed the "Spur" or blockhouse.¹ Preparations were now made for a general assault; and Morton, who had determined to lead the Scottish forces, was exulting in the near prospect of laying hands upon his victims, when to his mortification Grange presented himself on the wall with a white rod in his hand, and obtained, from his old friend and fellow-soldier Drury, an abstinence of two days, preparatory to a surrender. This was in the evening, and a meeting immediately took place between Grange and Robert Melvil, on the part of the Castilians, Killigrew and Drury for the Queen of England, and Lord Boyd for the regent. Kirkaldy's requests were, to have surety for their lives and livings, not be spoiled of their goods within the castle, to have license for Lord Hume and Lethington to retire into England, and himself to be allowed to remain unmolested in his own country.²

To these conditions Drury would probably have agreed, but they were scornfully rejected by Morton. As to the great body of the garrison, he said, he was ready, if they came out singly without arms, and submitted to his mercy, to grant them their lives, and permit them to go where they pleased; but there were nine persons who must be excepted from these conditions: Grange himself, William Maitland of Lethington the secretary, Alexander Lord Hume, Robert Melvil of Murdocairny, the Bishop of Dunkeld, and the Lairds of Restalrig, Drylaw, and Pitarrow. These must submit themselves unconditionally, and their fate be determined by the Queen of England,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Burghley, May 28, 1573.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, 27th May, 1573. Also, *ibid.* Sir William Drury to Burghley, 28th May, 1572, in which Drury says, "I will not harken unto the request of the Castilians, further than the regent and our ambassador shall allow of."

according to the treaty already made between her majesty and his sovereign.¹

This stern reply made it evident to these unfortunate men, that the regent would be contented with nothing but their lives; and, convinced of this, they rejected his terms, and declared their resolution to abide the worst. But this was no longer in their power, for the soldiers began to mutiny, threatened to hang the secretary over the walls within six hours if he did not advise a surrender, and were ready to deliver the captain and his companions to the enemy.² In this dread dilemma an expedient was adopted, suggested probably by the fertile brain of Lethington. Grange, after refusing the terms in open conference, sent a secret message to Drury, in consequence of which two companies of the besieging force were admitted within the walls on the night of the 29th, and to them in the morning he and his companions surrendered; expressly stating, that they submitted, not to the Regent of Scotland, but to the Queen of England, and her general, Sir William Drury. They were accordingly carried to his quarters; and, notwithstanding some remonstrances upon the part of the regent, received with courtesy.³ Morton, however, was not thus to be balked of his prey. He instantly wrote to Burghley,

¹ Copy of the time, State-paper Office, "The regent's answer to the Castilians," May 28, 1573. Also, State-paper Office, copy, "Conditions of rendering the castle."

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, 20th June, 1573.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Sir William Drury to Burghley, Leith, June 5, 1573. There is a passage in his letter which is curious. He says, "By computation there hath been near 3000 great shot bestowed against the castle in this service, and the bullets of all or the most part recovered, and brought again, part by our own labours, and part by the Scots, paying to the Scottish people a piece of their coin called a *barbee* for every bullet, which is in value English, one penny and a quarter."

warning him that the chief authors of all the mischief were now remaining, without condition, in the hands of Elizabeth's ministers, entreating the queen's immediate decision upon their fate, and requesting them to be delivered to him, that they might suffer for their crimes.¹ Killigrew, too, had the barbarity to advise their execution; and Drury anxiously awaited his next orders. At this trying moment, Grange and Lethington addressed the following letter to one who had once been knit to them in ties of the strictest friendship, the Lord Treasurer Burghley.

“ My Lord—The malice of our enemies is the more increased against us, that they have seen us rendered in the queen's majesty's will, and now to seek refuge at her highness's hands. And, therefore, we doubt not, but they will go about by all means possible to procure our mischief; yea, that their cruel minds shall lead them to that impudency to crave our bloods at her majesty's hands. But whatsoever their malice be, we cannot fear that it shall take success; knowing with how gracious a princess we have to do, which hath given so many good proofs to the world of her clemency and mild nature, that we cannot mistrust that the first example of the contrary shall be shown upon us. We take this to be her very natural, *Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos*.

“ We have rendered ourselves to her majesty, which to our own countrymen we would never have done, for no extremity [that] might have come. We trust her majesty will not put us out of her hands to make any others, especially our mortal enemy, our masters. If it will please her majesty to extend her most gracious clemency towards us, she may be as assured to have

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iv. fol. 85, dorso, Morton to Burghley, 31st May, 1573.

us as perpetually at her devotion as any of this nation, yea, as any subject of her own; for now with honour we may oblige ourselves to her majesty farther than before we might, and her majesty's benefit will bind us perpetually. In the case we are in we must confess we are of small value; yet may her majesty put us in case, that perhaps hereafter we will be able to serve her majesty's turn, which occasion being offered, assuredly there shall be no inlack of good will. Your lordship knoweth already what our request is; we pray your lordship to further it. There was never time wherein your lordship's friendship might stand us in such stead. As we have oftentimes heretofore tasted thereof, so we humbly pray you let it not inlack us now, in time of this our great misery, when we have more need than ever we had. Whatsoever our deservings have been, forget not your own good natural. If, by your lordship's mediation, her majesty conserve us, your lordship shall have us perpetually bound to do you service. * * Let not the misreports of our enemies prevail against us. When we are in her majesty's hands she may make us what pleaseth her. * * * From Edinburgh, the 1st June, 1573."¹

This letter produced no effect. Elizabeth, indeed, did not instantly decide, and requested particular information to be sent her of the "quality and quantity of the prisoners' offences;" but Killigrew and Morton so strongly advised their execution, that the queen commanded them to be delivered up to the regent, to be dealt with as he pleased. This, as she must have known, was equivalent to signing their death-warrant. Before, however, the final order arrived, Lethington died in prison. It was reported that he had swallowed poison;

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. iv. fol. 86, Lethington and Grange to Lord Burghley, 1st June, 1573.

but the rumour was uncertain, and was treated by many as an invention of his enemies.¹ Ten days after this, Drury reluctantly complied with the orders of Elizabeth, and delivered Grange, Hume, John Maitland, (Lethington's younger brother,) and Robert Melvil, to the regent;² Grange's brother (Sir James Kirkaldy) being already in Morton's hands.

Much interest was now exerted to save the life of Grange, but without success: he had made himself too conspicuous, and his talents for war were much dreaded by his adversaries. A hundred gentlemen, his friends and kinsmen, offered for his pardon to become perpetual servants to the house of Angus and Morton in "bond of manrent," a species of obligation well known in those times, and to pay two thousand pounds to the regent, besides an annuity of three thousand merks; but although Morton's prevailing vice was avarice, he was compelled to resist the temptation, influenced, as he stated in a letter to Killigrew, by the "denunciations of the preachers,"³ who cried out that God's plague would not cease till the land were purged with blood. They were aware of the prediction of Knox, so recently uttered upon his death-bed, that Grange should be shamefully dragged from the rock wherein he trusted, and hanged in the face of the sun. The success of Drury had fulfilled the first part, and the violence with which the ministers opposed every intercession for mercy, affords a melancholy proof of their determination that

¹ British Museum, Caligula, C. iv. fol. 97, copy, Elizabeth to Morton, June 9, 1573. Ibid. fol. 101, Killigrew to Burghley, June 12, 1573. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, June 20, 1573.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Drury to Burghley, Leith, 18th June, 1573.

³ Ibid. Morton to Killigrew, August 5, 1573. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. VI. Diurnal of Occurrents, p. 336.

the second head of the reputed prophecy should be as punctually accomplished.

Nor were they disappointed. On the 3d of August, Sir William Kirkaldy and his brother were brought from Holyrood to the cross of Edinburgh, and executed in the presence of an immense concourse of spectators. They were attended on the scaffold by Mr David Lindsay, a martial clergyman of those times, to whose hands, if we may believe Melvil, it was difficult to say whether the Bible or the hagbut were most congenial instruments. Grange received his ministrations with gratitude, and expressed on the scaffold deep penitence for his sins and unshaken attachment to his captive sovereign.¹

Thus died the famous Laird of Grange, a gentleman who, although his character will not bear examination, if we look to consistency and public principle, was justly reputed one of the best soldiers and most accomplished cavaliers of his time.²

The year 1573 was thus fatal to the cause of Mary, whose last hope expired with the execution of this brave man, and the surrender of the castle of Edinburgh. In England she had seen all her plans blasted by the death of Norfolk and the imprisonment of the Bishop of Ross: to France she could no longer look for active interference in her behalf, for Elizabeth had recently entered into the defensive treaty of Blois, with that kingdom; and Catherine of Medicis was negotiating a marriage between the English queen

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, August 3, 1573. Melvil's Diary, pp. 26, 27, 28.

² Melvil's Memoirs, p. 257. His character of Grange is very expressive. "He was," says he, "humble, gentle, and meek; like a lamb in the house, but a lion in the field; a lusty, stark, and well-proportioned personage, and of a hardy and magnanimous courage." See also, Melvil's Diary, p. 28.

and her son the Duke D'Alençon, a proposal hollow indeed, and insincere on both sides, yet, for the time, rendering all interference with Scotland on the part of France unadvisable. Even Spain she could no longer regard with any confidence. The Duke of Alva was the friend and secret correspondent of Burghley and Elizabeth ; and although the Roman Catholic refugees in Flanders were incessant in their intrigues, and Philip himself seemed disposed to annoy her on the side of Ireland and Scotland, the influence of this minister effectually counteracted any decided enterprise.¹ With the death of Kirkaldy, therefore, the reign of Mary properly terminates ; for immediately after that event, her last intrepid supporter, Sir Adam Gordon of Auchendown, retired to France ; and from that period till her death, no subject dared to acknowledge her as his sovereign.

¹ Gonzalez, pp. 370, 371.

CHAP. IV.

REGENCY OF MORTON.

1573—1580.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>England.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Germany.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Portugal.</i>	<i>Pope.</i>
Elizabeth.	Charles IX. Henry III.	Maximilian II. Rudolph II.	Phillip II.	Sebastian.	Gregory XIII.

SCOTLAND was now at peace; and the regent, having nothing to fear from domestic enemies or foreign intrigue, addressed himself with great energy and success to reduce the country to order. The border districts, at all times impatient under the restraints of a firm government, had, during the late civil commotions, become the scene of the utmost violence and confusion; but Morton, advancing from Peebles to Jedburgh with a force of four thousand men, soon compelled the principal chiefs to respect the law and give pledges for their obedience.¹ Sir James Hume of Coldingknowes was then appointed warden of the east, Lord Maxwell of the west, and Sir John Carmichael of the middle marches;² and the regent had leisure to renew his correspondence and confirm his ties with England.

Some time before this, when Killigrew, after his successful embassy, returned to the English court,³

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, the Regent to Lord Burghley, Kelso, August 30, 1573.

² Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 337. Spottiswood, p. 272.

³ June 29.

Morton had sent a memorial to Elizabeth,¹ in which he pointed out the principles upon which he proposed to regulate his future government. He declared the grateful feelings entertained by himself and the people, for her late assistance in quieting their troubled country, and reducing it under the king's obedience.² He urged the necessity of entering into a mutual league for the maintenance of the Protestant religion, and its professors, against the Council of Trent; and suggested the expediency of a contract or band for mutual defence from foreign invasion.³ In a letter written at the same time to Burghley, he pointed out the heavy charges which he had incurred, and requested pecuniary assistance, as it would still be necessary for him to provide against any renewed rebellion by keeping up a body of troops; and he, lastly, reminded Elizabeth that Mary, the root of all the evil, was still in her power, and at her disposal. "The ground of the trouble," said he, "remains in her majesty's hands and power; whereunto I doubt not her highness will put order when she thinks time, so as presently I will not be further curious thereanent, abiding the knowledge of her majesty's mind, how she shall think convenient to proceed in that behalf."⁴ It appears from this sentence, that the regent invited the English queen to renew the negotiations for putting Mary to death in Scotland, which were so suddenly broken off by the decease of Mar; and indeed, some time before the surrender of the castle of Edinburgh, Killigrew the ambassador wrote to Burghley, that he had given Morton a strong hint upon the subject. He stated,

¹ Copy, State-paper Office, Memoirs of me, the Lord Regent of Scotland, to the Queen's Majesty of England's Ambassador, &c. 26th June, 1573.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Morton to Burghley, June 25, 1573.

that in a conversation which took place in the palace, the regent had declared, that as long as the Scottish queen lived, there would be treason, troubles, and mischief: "to which," said Killigrew, "I answered he might help that; and he said, when all was done, he thought at the next parliament * * to prove the noblemen after this concord, to see what might be done."¹ We do not find, however, that Elizabeth at this moment gave any encouragement to the renewal of this nefarious negotiation.

All was now quiet in Scotland; and it is remarkable that, notwithstanding the miseries of the civil war, the general prosperity of the country had been progressive. Commerce and trade had increased; and whilst the power of the high feudal lords was visibly on the decay, the middle classes had risen in importance; and the great body of the people, instructed in their political duties by the sermons of the clergy, and acquiring from the institution of parish schools a larger share of education and intelligence, began to appreciate their rights, and to feel their own strength. There is a passage in a letter of Killigrew, which is worthy of notice upon this subject. "Methinks," said this acute observer, "I see the noblemen's great credit decay in this country, and the barons, burrows, and such like, take more upon them; the ministers and religion increase, and the desire in them to prevent the practices of the papists; the number of able men for service very great, and well furnished both on horse and foot; their navy so augmented, as it is a thing almost incredible."² It is to be recollected, that Killigrew's last

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, the Regent to Lord Burghley, Holyrood, 26th June, 1573. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, 4th March, 1572-3.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley, 11th Nov. 1572.

visit to Scotland had been in 1567, immediately after the murder of the king; and that the remarkable change which he now noticed, had taken place in the brief period of five years.

This flourishing state of things, however, did not long continue; for although the regent was justly entitled to the praise of restoring security and order, and his vigour in the punishment of crime, and the maintenance of the authority of the laws, was superior to that of any former governor, there was one vice which stained his character, and led to measures of an unpopular and oppressive kind. This was avarice: and he found the first field for its exercise in an attack upon the patrimony of the Kirk. He had the address to persuade the Presbyterian clergy, that it would be the best thing for their interests to resign at once into his hands the thirds of the benefices, which had been granted for their support by a former parliament. Their collectors, he said, were often in arrear; but his object would be to make the stipend local, and payable in each parish where they served. This would be a better system; and if it failed, they should, upon application, be immediately reinstated in their right and possession.¹ The plan was agreed to, but was followed by immediate repentance on the part of the clergy; as the moment Morton became possessed of the thirds, his scheme of spoliation was unmasked. The course he followed was, to appoint two, three, or even four churches to one minister, who was bound to preach in them by turns; and at the same time he placed in every parish a reader, whose duty was to officiate in the minister's absence, and to whom a miserable pittance of twenty or forty pounds Scots

¹ Spottiswood, p. 273.

was assigned. Having thus allotted to the church the smallest possible sum, he seized the overplus for himself; and when the clergy, sensible of their error, petitioned to be reinstated in their property, as had been promised, they were at first met with delays, and at last peremptorily told, that the appointment of the stipends ought properly to belong to the regent and council.

Nothing could be more distressing and degrading to this independent body of men than such a state of things. Before this, when their stipend was defective, they had an appeal to the superintendents, who, if not always able, were at least solicitous to relieve them. Now, they were compelled to become suitors at court, where their importunate complaints met only with ridicule and neglect. All this misery was justly laid to the regent's account; and although once their favourite, as a steady friend to the Reformation, he became highly unpopular with the clergy.

But if the grasping avarice of Morton fell heavy on the ministers of the Kirk, their woes were little to the miseries of the lower classes, more especially the artisans, merchants, and burgesses of the capital. Many of these had remained in the city during the time of the late troubles. These were now treated as rebels, who had resisted the king's authority; and they found that they must either submit to a public trial, or purchase security by payment of a heavy fine. The sum thus collected was intended at first to be divided between the state and the citizens whose houses and property had been destroyed; but it followed the fate of all moneys paid into the coffers of this rapacious governor.

Another source of complaint arose out of those itinerant courts, denominated Justice Ayres, and held

in different parts of the kingdom; which, under his administration, became little else than parts of a system of legal machinery, invented to overawe and plunder all classes in the country. To supply them with victims, he kept in pay a numerous body of informers, whose business it was to discover offences. Nor was it difficult to bring forward accusations of almost every possible nature, after so many years of a divided government, in which men, at one time or another, had been compelled to acknowledge very opposite authorities; now that of the king and his regent, now of the queen or her partisans. Ample ground was thus found for every species of prosecution: against merchants for transporting coin out of the realm, against Protestants for transgressing the statute by eating flesh in Lent, against the poorer artisans or labourers for the mere remaining in a town or city which was occupied by the queen's forces. As to those whose only offence was to be rich, their case was the worst of all; for to have a full purse, and "thole"¹ a heavy fine to the regent, were become synonymous terms.

These were not Morton's only resources. His petitions to Elizabeth for support were importunate and incessant; nor did he fail to remind her, that as it was by her allowance and advice that he had entered upon the regency, so he confidently expected her aid, especially in money, and pensions bestowed upon his friends. Although universally reputed rich, he dwelt pathetically on his limited revenue compared with his vast outlay; and in the letter to Burghley, which preferred these requests, he at the same time earnestly recommended Elizabeth to keep a watchful eye upon France, as the noted Adam Gordon, who had already

¹ "Thole," undergo.

done so much mischief in the north, was now received at the French court, and had offered, if properly supported, to overthrow the king's government in Scotland.¹

This news seems to have alarmed the English queen; for, not long after, she again despatched Killigrew into that country. Her avowed object was to learn the state of public feeling, and the disposition of the regent; "whether he was constant in his affection towards England; how his government was liked by the people; whether the Scottish queen had yet any party there; and, above all, to discover whether France was intriguing, as had been reported, to get possession of the young king." To the regent's proposal for a defensive and religious league, he was instructed to reply, that she deemed such a measure at present unnecessary; although, in any emergency, he might look confidently to her support. As to his request for money, Killigrew was, as delicately as he could, to "waive" all discussion upon the subject.

Here, however, as in the former embassy, there was a mission within a mission; and the envoy's open instructions embraced not the whole, nor even the most material part of the object for which he was sent. He was enjoined by Burghley and Leicester (doubtless, as before, with Elizabeth's knowledge and advice) to renew the negotiation for the "great matter," the project for having Mary put to death in her own country, and by her own subjects. Unfortunately the written orders upon this point are now lost; but immediately upon his arrival in Edinburgh, the ambassador communicated to Walsingham his fears that

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, the Regent Morton to Burghley, Jan. 21, 1573-4, Haddington.

they had suffered the time for the accomplishment of so desirable a result to go by.¹

On examining the state of the country, Killigrew became convinced that his sovereign and the English had lost popularity since his late residence in Scotland. The regent, although professing his usual devotion, appeared more distant and reserved. The queen's coldness on the subject of the proposed league, and her evasion of his requests for pensions, had produced no good effect; and some piracies committed by English subjects upon Scottish merchantmen, had occasioned great popular discontent.

Not long after the ambassador's arrival, he repaired to Stirling, where he was introduced to the young king, who had very recently completed his eighth year; and, after the interview, he sent this interesting portrait of him to Walsingham:—"Since my last unto you," said he, "I have been at Stirling to visit the king in her majesty's name, and met by the way the Countess of Mar coming to Edinburgh, to whom I did her majesty's commendations.

"The king seemed to be very glad to hear from her majesty, and could use pretty speeches: as, how much he was bound unto her majesty, yea, more than to his own mother. And at my departure, he prayed me to thank her majesty for the good remembrance she had of him; and further desired me to make his hearty commendations unto her majesty. His grace is well grown, both in body and spirit, since I was last here. He speaketh the French tongue marvellous well; and that which seems strange to me, he was able, *extempore*, (which he did before me,) to read a chapter of the Bible

¹ MS. State-paper Office, "Instructions given to Henry Killigrew, Esq." &c. May 22, 1574, signed by Walsingham. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 8, 1574, Berwick.

out of Latin into French, and out of French after into English, so well as few men could have added any thing to his translation. His schoolmasters, Mr George Buchanan and Mr Peter Young, rare men, caused me to appoint the king what chapter I would; and so did I, whereby I perceived it was not studied for. They also made his highness dance before me, which he likewise did with a very good grace; a prince sure of great hope, if God send him life.”¹

The English ambassador remained in Scotland for more than two months, during which time he had ample opportunities to make himself acquainted with the state of the country. He found the regent firm in his government, universally obeyed, somewhat more feared than loved; but bold, decisive, and clear-headed in the adoption and execution of such measures as he deemed necessary to establish quiet and good order in the realm.

The general prosperity of all classes of the people surprised him. He had, to use his own expression, left the country “in a consumption,” distracted and impoverished by a long continuance of civil war.² He had expected, on his return, to meet with the same melancholy state of things; but to his astonishment, the nation, as he described it to Burghley and Walsingham, had recovered itself with a rapidity of which he found it difficult to assign the cause. Its commerce and manufactures were in a flourishing condition, the people seemed to have forgotten their miseries, the nobles were reconciled to each other, and universally acknowledged the king’s authority. Although French

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 30, 1574.

² This must allude to his last visit but one, *i. e.* in 1567; for in 1572 he described it as rapidly improving. *Supra*, p. 216.

intrigue was still busy, and the captive queen attempted to keep up a party, the uncommon vigilance of Morton detected and put down all her practices. Formerly, the people, broken, bankrupt, and dispirited, were glad to sue for the protection of England, and the nobles were eager in their offers to Elizabeth. Now, to use Killigrew's phrase, they were "lusty and independent;" they talked as those who would be sued to; their alliance, they said, had been courted by "great monarchies;" and they complained loudly of the attack and plunder of their merchantmen by the English pirates. On this subject the regent expressed himself keenly, and was greatly moved. He dwelt, too, on other causes of dissatisfaction. The rejection of the proposed league by Elizabeth; her silence as to sending him any aid, or granting any pensions; the delay in giving back the ordnance which had been taken by the English, and other lighter subjects of complaint, were all recapitulated; and it was evident to Killigrew that there was an alteration in the relative position of the two countries, which he assured Walsingham would not be removed by mere words of compliment.¹

The ambassador anxiously impressed upon Elizabeth and her ministers, that the Scots were no longer dependent upon England; and as to attempting to make any impression upon the regent in "the great matter,"² which Leicester and Burghley were solicitous should be again secretly discussed, it seemed to him a vain idea at present. If Morton were to consent to put Mary to death on her delivery into his hands, it would only be, as he soon perceived, by the offer of a far higher bribe than Elizabeth was disposed to give; and

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, June 23, 1574. Ibid. same to same, June 24, 1574. Ibid. 18th June, 1574.

² The having Mary put to death in Scotland.

by the settlement of large annuities on such of the nobles as were confidants to his cruel design. Killigrew was so assured of the backwardness of his royal mistress upon this point, and the determination of the regent not to move without such inducement, that he begged to be allowed to return. "I see no cause," said he to Walsingham, "why I should remain here any longer; * * * especially if you resolve not upon the league, nor upon pensions, which is the surest ground I do see to build 'the great matter' upon, without which small assurance can be made. I pray God we prove not herein like those who refused the three volumes of Sibylla's prophecies, with the price which afterwards they were glad to give for one that was lost; for sure I left the market here better cheap than now I find it."¹

The Queen of England, however, was not to be so easily diverted from any object upon which she considered the safety of herself and her kingdom to depend, and she insisted that her ambassador should remain and accompany the regent in his northern progress, upon which he was about to enter.² "I think it not convenient," said Walsingham to him in a letter of the 18th July, "that you be recalled till such time as you have advertised how you find the regent affected touching 'the great matter' you had in commission to deal in; and therefore I think fit you accompany the regent till you be revoked."³

In the meantime, Elizabeth held a secret conference with Leicester, Burghley, and Walsingham, and appears to have herself suggested a new scheme for getting

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Walsingham, 12th July, 1574, Edinburgh. Ibid. 23d June, 1574.

² Ibid. June 23, 1574.

³ Ibid. draft, Walsingham to Killigrew, July 18, 1574.

rid of Mary. It is unfortunately involved in much obscurity, owing to the letter in which it is alluded to being written partly in cipher; but it was disapproved of by Walsingham, apparently on the ground that it would be dangerous to send the Scottish queen into Scotland without an absolute certainty that she should be put to death.¹

The English queen was evidently distracted between the fear of two dangers,—one, the retaining Mary within her dominions, which experience had taught her was the cause of constant plots and practices; the other, the delivering her to the Scots, an expedient which, unless it were carried through in the way proposed by Burghley and Leicester in 1572²—that is, under a positive agreement that she should be put to death, was, as they justly thought, full of peril. Morton, however, although he had shown himself perfectly willing to receive Mary under this atrocious condition, continued firm in his resolution not to sell his services for mere words. He, too, insisted on certain terms; especially an advance in money, and pensions to his friends. But the queen deemed his demands exorbitant; and, as was not unfrequent with her when pressed by a difficulty from which she saw no immediate escape, she dismissed the subject from her mind,

¹ MS. letter, State paper Office, Walsingham to Killigrew, Woodstock, July 30, 1574. Killigrew accordingly accompanied the regent in his northern progress, and, on their arrival at Aberdeen, held a secret consultation on *the great matter*; but, unfortunately, the letters in which we might have looked for a particular account of what took place have disappeared. All that we know with certainty is, that the ambassador returned soon after to the English court, (Aug. 16;) and that in a brief memorandum of such things as the regent desired him to remember in his conferences with the Queen of England, is this slight note;—"What further is to be looked for in that which passed betwixt us at Aberdeen, touching *the matter of greatest moment*."—MS. Memorandum, State-paper Office, August 16, 1574.

² *Supra*, pp. 180, 185.

and unwisely took refuge in delay. In this manner "the great matter" for the present was allowed to sleep; and Mary owed her life to the parsimony of Elizabeth, and the avarice of the Scottish regent.¹

Killigrew not long after left Scotland, and on parting with him, Morton assured Leicester, in a letter which this ambassador carried with him, "that no stranger had ever departed from that country with greater liking and contentment of the people."² He requested him at the same time, on his return to the English court, to communicate with the queen and council upon some subjects of import which required a speedy answer. These embraced the dangers to which the Protestant interest in Scotland was exposed from continental intrigue; but, to the regent's mortification, many months elapsed before any answer was received. At last, Walsingham, alarmed by the apathy of Elizabeth, and the continued practices of her enemies, endeavoured, in a letter of free remonstrance, to rouse his mistress to a sense of her peril. He told her, that he had recently received a despatch from the Scottish regent, and with it some intercepted papers of the Bishop of Ross, which required instant consideration. They would convince her, he trusted, how utterly hollow were the promises of France and Spain, and to what imminent danger she was exposed from "unsound subjects at home." He besought her deeply to weigh the matter, and "set to" her hand for the protection of her realm; observed that, though the Cardinal of Lorraine were dead, he had left successors enough to execute his plots; and con-

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, the Regent to Leicester, August 16, 1574, Aberdeen.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Morton to Leicester, 16th August, 1574.

jured her to use expedition, before the hidden sparks of treason, now smouldering within the realm, should break out into an unquenchable fire. "For the love of God, madam," said he, "let not the case of your diseased estate hang longer in deliberation. Diseased estates are no more cured by consultation without execution, than unsound bodies by mere conference with the physician; and you will perceive by his letters how much the regent is aggrieved."¹

For a moment these strong representations alarmed Elizabeth, and she talked of sending Killigrew or Randolph immediately into Scotland;² but her relations with France occasioned new delays. She had entered into an amicable correspondence with Catherine de Medicis; the Duke D'Alençon still warmly prosecuted his marriage suit; and although the English queen had not the slightest intentions of granting it, she, as usual, dallied and coquetted with the proposal. In the midst of all, Charles the Ninth died; the queen became engrossed with the speculations and uncertainties which follow a new succession; and Morton, irritated by neglect, was driven by resentment and necessity to cultivate the friendship of that party in Scotland which was devoted to France.

This alienation was soon detected by Walsingham, who wrote in alarm to Burghley, and on the succeeding day to Elizabeth, adjuring her, for the love of God, to arrest the impending mischief, and secure the Scottish amity, which of all others stood them at that

¹ MS. letter, draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Elizabeth, January 15, 1574-5.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Edward Cary to Walsingham, 17th January, 1574-5. Also, Original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to the Queen, 20th March, 1574-5. In the midst of these anticipated troubles, died, at his palace of Hamilton, the Duke of Chastelherault, better known by the name of the Regent Arran, on the 22d January, 1574-5.

moment in greatest stead. Already, he said, the regent was conferring favours on the Hamiltons, who were entirely French; already he was plotting to get the young King of Scots out of the hands of his governor, Alexander Erskine; Henry the Third, the new King of France, was well known to be devoted to the house of Guise; and with such feelings, what was to be expected, but that the moment he had quieted the disturbances in his own realm, he would keenly embrace the cause of the Scottish queen?¹

Elizabeth was at last roused, and gave orders for the despatch of Henry Killigrew into Scotland, accompanied by Mr Davison, afterwards the celebrated secretary, whom he was directed to leave as English resident at the Scottish court.² But before the ambassador crossed the border, an affray broke out, which threatened the most serious consequences, and arrested him at Berwick. At a warden court, held by Sir John Forster, warden of the middle marches, and Sir John Carmichael, keeper of Liddesdale, a dispute arose which led to high words between these two leaders; and their followers, taking fire, assaulted each other. The Scots at first were repulsed, but being joined by a body of their countrymen from Jedburgh, rallied, and attacked, and totally routed the English. Sir John Heron, keeper of Tynedale, was slain; whilst Sir John Forster, Sir Francis Russell, Sir Cuthbert Collingwood, Mr Ogle, Mr Fenwick, and about three hundred men, were made prisoners, and carried by the Earl of Angus to the regent at Dalkeith. Morton received them with much courtesy, dismissed

¹ MS. letter, original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, 11th April, 1575. Also, State-paper Office, original draft, Walsingham to Elizabeth, 12th April, 1575.

² MS. State-paper Office, original, instructions to Henry Killigrew, 27th May, 1575.

the prisoners of inferior rank, and expressed, in a letter to Elizabeth, his readiness to afford redress: but he detained the lord warden; and when the queen insisted that the regent should meet Lord Huntingdon, the president of the north, in a personal conference in England, he peremptorily refused. Such a proceeding, he said, was beneath the dignity of the office he held; but he offered to send the justice-clerk to arrange a meeting in Scotland.¹

On being informed of this, Elizabeth, already chafed by the detention of her warden, broke into one of those furious fits of passion which sometimes caused her highest councillors to tremble for their heads, and disagreeably reminded them of her father. In this frame she dictated a violent message to the Scottish regent, which she commanded Killigrew to deliver without reserve or delay. She had seen, she said, certain demands made, on his part, by the justice-clerk, and did not a little wonder at so strange and insolent a manner of dealing. He had already been guilty of a foul fact in detaining her warden, the governor of one of the principal forts in her realm: he had committed a flagrant breach of treaty; and had she been inclined to prosecute her just revenge, he should soon have learnt what it was for one of his base calling to offend one of her quality. And whereas, continued she, he goeth about to excuse the detaining of our warden, alleging that he feared he might revenge himself when his blood was roused for his kinsman's death,—such an excuse seemed to her, she must tell him, a scornful aggravation of his fault; for she would have him to know, that neither Forster nor any other public officer or private subject of hers dared to offer

¹ MS. Relation of the Affairs of Scotland from 1568 to 1579. Warrender MS. Collections, vol. B. fol. 208.

such an outrage to her government, as, for private revenge, to break a public treaty. As to the conference with Huntingdon, instead of receiving her offer with gratitude, he had treated it with contempt. He had taken upon him to propose a place of meeting, four miles within Scotland; an ambitious part in him, and savouring so much of an insolent desire of sovereignty, that she would have scorned such a request had it come from the king his master, or the greatest prince in Europe. To conclude, she informed him that, if he chose to confer with the Earl of Huntingdon at the *Bond Rode*,¹ she was content; and he would do well to remember that his predecessor, the Regent Moray, had not scrupled to come to York, and afterwards to London, to hold a consultation with her commissioners.²

This passionate invective I have given, as it is highly characteristic of the queen; but Huntingdon and Killigrew deemed it proper to soften its expressions, in conveying the substance of it to the regent, whom they had no mind unnecessarily to irritate.³ Even in its diluted state, however, it awed him into submission. He met the English president on the 16th of August at the appointed place, arranged all differences, and not only dismissed his prisoners, but loaded them with presents, and sent Carmichael up to England to ask pardon of Elizabeth. Amongst his gifts were some choice falcons; upon which a saying rose amongst the borderers, alluding to the death of Sir John Heron, that for this once the regent had lost

¹ The *Bond Rode*, or boundary road, a place or road on the marches near Berwick, common to both kingdoms.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, to Killigrew in Scotland. From the Queen.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Killigrew to Leicester, August 14, 1575.

by his bargain: "He had given live hawks for dead Herons."¹

The quarrel having been adjusted, Killigrew proceeded to Scotland. On his arrival there, he perceived every where indications of the same flourishing condition in which he had lately left the country. Whilst the people seemed earnestly disposed to preserve the amity with England, all lamented the late accident on the borders; and the ministers in their sermons prayed fervently for the continuance of the peace. As to the regent himself, the ambassador found him still firm in his affection to England, and in resisting the advances of France. Although not popular, generally, the vigour and success of his government were admitted even by his enemies: property and person were secure, except from the rapacity of the regent himself, and he gave an example of confidence in his own conduct; for he never used a guard, and would pursue his diversions, walking abroad with his fishing-rod over his shoulder, or his hawk on his wrist,² almost alone, to the wonder of many. The borders, since the late disturbance, had been quiet; and so rapidly had the foreign commerce of the country increased, that Killigrew reckoned it able to raise twenty thousand mariners.³

Such was the favourable side of the picture; but there were some drawbacks to this prosperity, arising chiefly out of the feuds amongst the nobility, and the discontent of the clergy. It was reported that

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Huntingdon to Leicester, 14th August, 1575. Ibid. MS. letter, Huntingdon to Sir T. Smith, 17th August, 1575. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, the Regent to Walsingham, Sept. 20, 1575; and Hume of Godscroft, vol. ii. p. 253.

² Murdin, p. 283.

³ This is the number stated in Killigrew's paper; but he must have made a highly erroneous and exaggerated calculation. Murdin, p. 285.

Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, who had shot the Regent Moray, and fled to the continent after the murder was to be brought home by the Lord of Arbroath. Arbroath was second son of the late Duke of Chastelherault, and, owing to the insanity of Arran his elder brother, had become the chief leader of the Hamiltons. The idea of the return of the late regent's murderer, roused his friends to the highest pitch of resentment; and Douglas of Lochleven, Moray's near kinsman, assembling a force of twelve hundred men, vowed deadly vengeance against both the assassin and Arbroath his chief. The Earls of Argyle, Athole, Buchan, and Mar, with Lords Lindsay and Ruthven, espoused the quarrel of Lochleven: Arbroath, on the other hand, would be supported, it was said, by all the friends of France and the queen; whilst Morton in vain endeavoured to bring both parties to respect the laws. Arbroath, too, meditated a marriage with the Lady Buccleuch, sister to the Earl of Angus, the regent's nephew and heir; and when Morton appeared to countenance the match, a clamour arose amongst the young king's friends, that he showed an utter disregard to the safety of his sovereign. Was not the duke, they said, failing the king, the next heir to the throne? was not Arran, that nobleman's eldest son, mad? and did not the right of the royal succession devolve on Arbroath? Had the regent forgotten the ambition of the house of Hamilton, and Arbroath's familiarity with blood? and would he strengthen the hands of such a man by a marriage in his own family? If so, he need not look for the support of any faithful subject who tendered the young king's preservation.¹

To these were added other causes of disquiet and

¹ Murdin, pp. 282, 283.

difficulty. Morton was no longer popular with the citizens of Edinburgh; nor, indeed, could he reckon upon the support of any of the middle or lower classes in the state. His exactions had completely disgusted the merchants of the capital. He had imprisoned the most opulent amongst them; and this caused so great an outcry, that many scrupled not to say, that, if he did not speedily change his measures, the same burghers' hands which had put him up would as surely pull him down again. To all these causes of discontent, must be added his quarrel with the Kirk, and the soreness arising out of his recent establishment of Episcopacy. This had given mortal offence to some of the leading ministers, who considered the appointment of bishops, abbots, and other Roman Catholic dignitaries, to be an unchristian and heterodox practice, utterly at variance with the great principles of their Reformation. They arraigned, and with justice as far as regarded the regent, the selfish and venal feelings which had led to the preservation of this alleged relic of popery. It was evident, they said, that avarice, and not religion, was at the root of the whole. The nobles and the laity had already seized a large portion of the church lands, and their greedy eyes still coveted more. These prizes they were determined to retain; whilst the poor ministers, who laboured in the vineyard, and to whom the thirds of the benefices had been assigned, found this a nominal provision, and were unable, with their utmost efforts, to extract a pittance from the collectors; the whole of the rents finding their way into the purses of the regent and his favourites. And how utterly ridiculous was this last settlement of the bishops? Was it not notorious, that the see attached to the primacy of St Andrews belonged, in reality, to Morton himself?

that there was a secret agreement, a nefarious collusion, between him and the prelate, his own near relative, whom he had placed in it? Was it not easy to see that the chief purpose of this ecclesiastical office was to enable the regent more readily and decently to suck out the riches of the benefice, as, in the north country, farmers would sometimes stuff a calf's skin, called there a *tulchan*, and set it up before a cow to make her give her milk more willingly? What were all these bishops, and abbots, and priors, whom they now heard so much about, but mere *tulchans*,—men of straw, clerical calves,—set up by the nobility to facilitate their own Simoniacal operations?

These arguments, which were enforced with much popular eloquence and humour by those ministers who were attached to the Presbyterian form of church government, produced a great effect upon the people, already sufficiently disgusted by the exactions and tyranny of the regent. Morton, too, increased the discontent by his violence, threatening the most zealous of the ministers, and broadly declaring his conviction that there would be no peace or order in the country till some of them were hanged.¹

At this crisis, Andrew Melvil, a Scottish scholar of good family, who had been educated first in his native country, and afterwards brought up in the strictest principles of Calvin and Beza at Geneva, returned to Scotland from the continent. He was profoundly skilled in the Greek and Latin languages, and calculated, both by his learning and enthusiasm, to be of essential service to the reviving literature of his country; but he was rash and imperious, a keen republican, sarcastic and severe in his judgment of

¹ Calderwood, MS. Hist. British Museum. Ayscough's Catalogue, No. 4735, p. 1053 of the MS.

others, and with little command of temper. Soon after his arrival he acquired a great influence over Durie, one of the leading ministers of the Kirk, who, at his instigation, began to agitate the question, whether the office of a bishop was consistent with the true principles of church government, as they could be gathered from the Word of God? After various arguments and consultations held upon the subject, a form of church polity was drawn up by some of the leading ministers; and the regent, with greater indulgence than his former proceedings had promised, appointed some members of the council to take it into consideration; but they had scarcely met, when the state was suddenly plunged into new troubles, which at once broke off their conference.

This revolution originated in a coalition of the Earls of Athole and Argyle against the regent. Both these noblemen were of great power and possessions, and could command nearly the whole of the north of Scotland. Athole, a Stewart, was considered the leader of that party which had recently attached themselves to the young king, under the hope of prevailing upon him to assume the government in his own person. Being a Roman Catholic, he was, for this reason, much suspected by Morton; and he, in his turn, hated the regent for his cruel conduct to Lethington, to whom Athole had been linked in the closest friendship. Argyle, on the other hand, although he had formerly been united with Morton in most of his projects, was now completely estranged from his old comrade; and the cause of quarrel was to be traced to the regent's cupidity. Argyle had married the widow of the Regent Moray, Agnes Keith, a sister of the Earl Marshal, and through her had got possession of some of the richest of the

queen's jewels. These Mary had delivered to Moray in a moment of misplaced confidence. He, as was asserted, had advanced money upon them to the state; at his death they remained in the hands of his widow; and Morton now insisted on recovering them, in obedience to an order given on the subject by parliament. Argyle and his lady resisted; and although the jewels were at last surrendered, it was not till the noble persons who detained them were threatened with arrest. This, and other causes of dispute, had entirely alienated Argyle from Morton: but, for a short season, the regent derived security from the sanguinary contests between the two northern earls themselves. Their private warfare, however, which had threatened to involve in broils and bloodshed the whole of the north, was suddenly composed; and by one of those rapid changes which were by no means unfrequent in feudal Scotland, the two fierce rivals, instead of destroying each other, united in a league against the regent. This new state of things is to be traced to the influence of Alexander Erskine, the governor of the king and commander of Stirling castle. This gentleman had recently discovered that Morton, with that subtle and treacherous policy of which he had already given many proofs, was secretly plotting to get possession of the person of the young monarch, and to place a creature of his own in command of the castle of Stirling. To confound his scheme, Erskine, who was beloved by the higher nobles, and a principal member of the confederacy which had been formed for the king's protection, wrote secretly to Athole and Argyle, inviting them to come to Stirling, assuring them that James was already well disposed to redress their complaints against the regent, and promising them immediate access to the royal person.

It is scarcely to be believed that these plots and jealousies should have altogether escaped the attention of Morton. He had his secret emissaries both in Scotland and in England, and he must have been well aware of his increasing unpopularity. The age of the young king, who had now entered on his twelfth year, and begun to take an interest in the government, admonished him that every succeeding year would render it a more difficult task for any regent to engross the supreme power; and as long as James remained under the care of Alexander Erskine, whom he had reason to believe his enemy, it was evident that the continuance of his authority must be precarious. Already, he saw his sovereign surrounded by those who, for their own ends, sought to persuade him that he was arrived at an age when he ought to take the government into his own hands.

So far-sighted and experienced a political intriguer as Morton could not be sensible of all this, without speculating on the best mode of encountering the storm when it did arrive, and averting the wreck of his power. To continue sole regent much longer was evidently full of difficulty; but to flatter the young monarch by a nominal sovereignty, and to rule him as effectually under the title of king, as he had done when sole regent, would be no arduous matter, considering his tender years, provided he could undermine the influence of Erskine his governor, and crush the confederacy with Argyle and Athole. In the mean season, he resolved to await his time and watch their proceedings. But the regent, although cautious and calculating, was not aware of the full extent of the confederacy against him; and the catastrophe arrived more suddenly than he had anticipated. The intrigues of Argyle and Athole had not escaped the eyes of

Walsingham ; and in December 1577, Elizabeth, suspecting an impending revolution, despatched Sir Robert Bowes to Scotland, with the hope of preventing any open rupture between Morton and the nobility. He was instructed to inculcate the absolute necessity of union, to prevent both themselves and her kingdom from falling a sacrifice to the practices of foreign powers ; and to threaten Morton, that, if he continued refractory, and refused to make up his differences with his opponents, she would make no scruple to cast him off, and herself become a party against him. He carried also a flattering letter from the queen to the Earl of Athole, in which she assured him of her favourable feelings, and recommended peace.¹

For a moment, the envoy appears to have succeeded ; but he was aware that the friendship professed on both sides was hollow, and the lull of civil faction only temporary. This is evident from a letter which he wrote to Leicester, upon his return to Berwick. “ Albeit,” said he, “ those matters [in Scotland] are for a season wrapped up, yet it is not unlike, without wise handling and some charge to her majesty, that the fire will be readily kindled again. * * * The readiest way, in my opinion, to preserve the realm in quietness, with continuance of this amity, is to appease and ——² all the griefs between the regent and others of the realm, and by friendly reconciliation and union to make him gracious amongst them ; for which he must receive some apt lessons, with gentleness, from her majesty : but with the same, he must also receive

¹ MS. Instructions to Thomas Randolph, 30th January, 1577-8, State-paper Office. Orig. draft of MS. letter, State-paper Office, the Queen's Majesty to the Earl of Athole, December, 1577.

² A word in the original is here illegible.

some comfort, agreeable to his nature.”¹ It is evident from this, that Bowes had become convinced that, to conciliate Morton and preserve peace, Elizabeth must deal less in objurgation, and more in solid coin, than she had lately done; nor need we wonder that the envoy, afraid of undertaking so delicate a task, was happy to return. But the queen, who had received some new and alarming information of the success of French intrigue in Scotland, commanded him to revisit Edinburgh, and watch the proceedings of both parties. Even this, however, did not appear enough; and soon after, Randolph was despatched on a mission to the young king and the regent, its object being similar to that of Bowes, but his instructions more urgent and decided.² Some delay, however, occurred; and he had scarcely arrived in Scotland, when the clouds which had been so long gathering burst upon the head of the regent. The rapidity of the movements of the conspirators, and their complete success, were equally remarkable. On the 4th of March, 1577-8, Argyle rode with his usual retinue to Stirling, and being immediately admitted by Erskine to an interview with the young king, complained loudly of Morton’s insolent and oppressive conduct, not only to himself, but to the whole nobility and people. He implored him to call a convention to examine their grievances; and, if he found them true, to take the government upon himself, and put an end to a system which, whilst it cruelly oppressed his subjects, left him nothing but the name of a king. These arguments were enforced by Erskine the governor; the famous Buchanan, one of the tutors

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 86, Sir R. Bowes to Leicester, October 9, 1577, Berwick.

² Ibid. fol. 3, Instructions given, 31st January, to Thomas Randolph. Also, MS. State-paper Office, Mr Randolph’s several Instructions in his Ambassades.

of the young monarch, threw all his weight into the same scale; and the other confederates who had joined the conspiracy, Glamis the chancellor, the Abbot of Dunfermline, the secretary, Tullibardine the comptroller, and the Lords Lindsay, Ruthven, Ogilvy and others, eagerly joined in recommending such a course. Athole at this time was absent: but he arrived, no doubt by concert, at the moment his presence was most necessary; and being instantly admitted into the castle, and led to the king, his opinion was urgently demanded. Scarcely, however, had he time to deliver it, and to express his detestation of the tyranny by which they had been so long kept down, when a messenger brought letters from Morton, keenly reprobating the conduct of the northern earls. He remonstrated with the king on the outrage committed against his royal person and himself; represented the necessity of inflicting on such bold offenders speedy and exemplary punishment; and concluded by declaring his anxiety to resign his office, if his royal master was prepared to overlook such proceedings. This offer was too tempting to be rejected: letters were addressed to the nobility, requiring their instant attendance at court. Argyle, Athole, and Erskine, took care that those summonses should find their way only to their friends. The convention assembled; a resolution was unanimously passed that the king should take the government upon himself; and before the regent had time to retract, he was waited upon by Glamis the chancellor, and Lord Herries, who brought a message from his sovereign, requiring his immediate resignation. Although startled at the suddenness of the demand, Morton was too proud, or too wary, to pretend any repugnance. He received the envoys with cheerfulness; rode with them from his

castle at Dalkeith to the capital; and there, at the Cross, heard the herald and the messenger-at-arms proclaim his own deprivation, and the assumption of the government by the young king. He then, in the presence of the people, resigned the ensigns of his authority; and, without a murmur or complaint, retired to one of his country seats, where he seemed wholly to forget his ambition, and to be entirely engrossed in the tranquil occupations of husbandry and gardening.

The news of this revolution was instantly communicated by Randolph to his friend Killigrew, in this laconic and characteristic epistle, written when he was on the eve of throwing himself on horseback to proceed to England, and in person inform Elizabeth of the alarming change.

“All the devils in hell are stirring and in great rage in this country. The regent is discharged, the country broken, the chancellor slain by the Earl of Crawford, four killed of the town out of the castle, and yet are we in hope of some good quietness, by the great wisdom of the Earl of Morton. There cometh to her majesty from hence an ambassador shortly. I know not yet who, but Sandy Hay in his company. It behoveth me to be there before: and so show my wife.”¹

The death of the chancellor, Lord Glammis, here alluded to by Randolph, was in no way connected with the revolution which he describes, but took place in a casual scuffle between his retinue and that of the Earl of Crawford. His high office was bestowed upon Athole, Morton's chief enemy, and the leader of the confederacy which had deposed him. But this, though

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Killigrew, 20th March, 1577—that is, 1577-8. Signed jocularly, *Thomazo del Niente*. Sandy Hay was Alexander Hay, clerk-register.

it preserved the influence of the successful faction, scarcely compensated for the loss of their associate, who was accounted one of the wisest and most learned men in Scotland.

Meanwhile, the confederated nobles followed up their advantages. As the king had not yet completed his twelfth year, a council of twelve was appointed. It consisted of the Earls of Argyle, Athole, Montrose, and Glencairn; the Lords Ruthven, Lindsay, and Herries; the Abbots of Newbottle and Dunfermline; the Prior of St Andrews; and two supernumerary or extraordinary councillors—Buchanan the king's tutor, and James Makgill the clerk-register. All royal letters were to be signed by the king and four of this number; and as the first exercise of their power, they required from Morton the delivery of the castle of Edinburgh, the palace of Holyrood, the mint, and the queen's jewels and treasure. To all this prostration of his former greatness, he appears to have made no resistance; but simply requested, that, in the next parliament, they should pass an act approving of his administration during his continuance in the regency. Morton then held a hurried conference with Randolph, before that ambassador set off for the English court, intrusted him with a brief letter to Lord Burghley, written in his new character as a private man,¹ and seemed prepared, with perfect contentment, to sink into that condition.

It was evident, however, from the expressions he used in this short note, that he had informed Randolph of some ulterior design for his resumption of power, which he did not choose to commit to writing; and that the ambassador, long versant in Scottish broils

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, the Earl Morton to Lord Burghley, March 28, 1578. He signs simply, "Morton."

and intrigues, considered it a wise and likely project. Nor was he wrong in this conclusion: for the development of this counter-revolution, which restored Morton to power, followed almost immediately; and the outbreak was as sudden as the success was complete.

The king's lords, as Argyle and his friends were called, had formed their council,¹ assembled in the capital, conferred the chancellor's place on Athole, and proclaimed a parliament to be held on the 10th of June. On the 24th of April, the General Assembly met at Edinburgh; and having chosen Mr Andrew Melvil to be their moderator, proceeded to their deliberations with their usual zeal and energy. It was determined to revise the Book of Church Polity, and lay it before the king and council; and a blow was aimed at the late episcopal innovations, by a declaration that, owing to the great corruption already visible in the state of bishops, no see should be filled up till the next General Assembly of the church.² During these transactions Morton lived in retirement, and appeared wholly engrossed in his rural occupations; but he had secretly gained to his interest the young Earl of Mar, whose sister was the wife of Angus, Morton's heir, and the head of the house of Douglas. To Mar, he artfully represented that he was unjustly and shamefully treated by his uncle, Erskine the governor. He, the young earl, who was no longer a boy, was entitled by hereditary right to the government of Stirling castle; but his uncle usurped it, and with it kept hold of the king's person. It was Alexander Erskine, not the Earl of Mar, who was now considered the head of that ancient house. Would he submit to this ignominy,

¹ MS. Record of the Privy-council, in Register-house, Edinburgh, March 24, 1577-8.

² MS. Calderwood, pp. 1055-1059.

when, by a bold stroke, he might recover his lost rights; when the house of Douglas, with all its strength and vassalage, was ready to take his part; and his uncles, the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, offered their counsel and assistance? These arguments easily gained over the young lord; and as he and his retinue were generally lodged in the castle, he determined to put Morton's plan in execution.

On the 26th April, about five in the morning, before many of the garrison were stirring, Mar, who had slept that night in the castle, assembled his retinue, under the pretence of a hunting party, and riding to the gates with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, called for the keys. He was met by his uncle, Erskine the governor, with a small company, who for the moment suspected nothing; but finding himself rudely accosted as a usurper by the abbots, instantly dreaded some false play. To shout treason, seize a halbert from one of the guard, and call to his servants, was with Erskine the work of a moment; but, ere assistance arrived, his little band was surrounded, his son crushed to death in the tumult, and himself thrust without the gates into an outer hall, whilst Mar seized the keys, put down all resistance, and became master of the castle. In the midst of this uproar the young king awoke, and rushing in great terror from his chamber, tore his hair, and called out that the Master of Erskine was slain. He was assured that his governor was safe; and the Earl of Argyle, who had been roused by the tumult, finding the two abbots arguing with Erskine in the hall, but showing him no personal violence, affected to consider it a family quarrel between the uncle and the nephew, and retired, after advising an amicable adjustment. News of the tumult was, that evening, carried to the council at

Edinburgh, accompanied by an assurance from Mar, Argyle, and Buchanan the king's tutor, that the dispute was adjusted. Upon this they despatched Montrose, the same night, to Stirling, who, coming alone, was courteously received and admitted into the castle; but next day, when the council rode thither in a body and demanded admittance, this was peremptorily refused by Mar. They should all see the king, he said, but it must be one by one; and no councillor should enter the gates with more than one attendant.¹

Incensed at this indignity, the council assembled in Stirling, and issued a proclamation, prohibiting any resort of armed men thither, whilst they sent secret orders to convoke their own forces. But their measures were too late; Douglas of Lochleven had already entered the castle, joined Mar, and communicated with Morton, whose hand, it was strongly suspected, although it did not appear, had managed the whole. Angus, meantime, by his directions, was ready, at six hours' warning, with all the armed vassals of the house of Douglas; and the ex-regent, forgetting his gardens and pleasure grounds, hurried from his rural seclusion, and reappeared in public, the same subtle, daring, and unscrupulous leader as before.²

Events now crowded rapidly on each other. At the earnest request of the young king, an agreement took

¹ MS. Calderwood, British Museum, p. 1061. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. VII.

² Copy, Caligula, C. v. fol. 89, Sir Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley, Edinburgh, April 28, 1578. In this letter of Bowes to Burghley, written in the midst of this revolution, and on the very day the council rode to Stirling, he says, "What storm shall fall out of these swelling heats, doth not yet appear. But I think, verily, within two or three days, it will burst into some open matter, discovering sufficiently the purposes intended; wherein, to my power, I shall seek to quench all violent rages, and persuade to unity and concord amongst them."

place between Mar and his uncle, Alexander Erskine. The earl retained the castle of Stirling, and with it the custody of the royal person. To the Master of Erskine, so Alexander was called, was given the keeping of the castle of Edinburgh; and in a meeting held at Craigmillar, between Morton, Athole, and Argyle, it was decided that they should next day repair together to Stirling, and adjust all differences before the king in person. This was determined on the 8th of May; and that evening the two northern earls, after sharing Morton's hospitality at Dalkeith, rode with him to Edinburgh. In the morning, however, the ex-regent was nowhere to be found; and it turned out that he had risen before daybreak, and, with a small retinue, had galloped to Stirling, where he was received within the castle, and soon resumed his ascendancy both over Mar and the king.¹

Against this flagrant breach of agreement, Argyle and Athole loudly remonstrated; and Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassador, exerting himself to restore peace, the young monarch summoned a convention of his nobles; but the northern earls and their associates received such a proposal with derision, and sent word by Lord Lindsay, that they would attend no convention held by their enemies, within a fortress which they commanded. Other lords obeyed, but came fully armed, and with troops of vassals at their back; and both factions mustered in such strength, and exhibited such rancour, that, but for the remonstrances of Bowes, the country would have hurried into war.

Amidst the clamour and confusion, however, it was

¹ MS. Calderwood, British Museum. Ayscough, 4735, p. 1061. Also, original draft, State-paper Office, Articles delivered by Argyle, Athole, &c. to Lord Lindsay.

evident that the ex-regent directed all. By his persuasion a new council was appointed, in which he held the chief place. It was next determined to send the Abbot of Dunfermline as ambassador from the young king to Elizabeth. He was instructed to thank that princess for the special favour with which she had regarded him from his birth, to confirm the peace between the two countries, and to propose a stricter league for mutual defence, and the maintenance of true religion.¹

The parliament had been summoned to meet in July at Edinburgh: but Morton was well aware of his unpopularity in that city, and dreaded to bring the king into the midst of his enemies. By his persuasion, therefore, the young monarch changed the place of assembly to the great hall within Stirling castle, where he knew all would be secure. But this new measure gave deep offence; and when the day approached, Argyle, Athole, Montrose, Lindsay, and Herries, with their adherents, assembled in the capital, declaring that nothing should compel them to attend a parliament within a citadel garrisoned by their mortal enemies, and where it would be a mockery to expect any free discussion.

Despising this opposition, Morton hurried on his measures, and the estates assembled in the great hall within Stirling castle.² It was opened by the king in person; but scarcely had the members taken their seats, when Montrose and Lord Lindsay presented themselves as commissioners from Argyle, Athole, and their adherents, and declared that this could in no sense be called a free parliament. It was held, they said, within an armed fortress; and for this cause the noble peers, whose messengers they were, had

¹ MS. draft, State-paper Office, June 18, 1578.

² July 16, 1578.

refused to attend it; "and we now come," said Lindsay, with his usual brevity and bluntness, "to protest against its proceedings." Morton here interrupted him, and commanded him and his companion to take their places; to which Lindsay answered, that he would stand there till the king ordered him to his seat. James then repeated the command, and the old lord sat down. After a sermon, which was preached by Duncanson the minister of the royal household, and a harangue by Morton, who, in the absence of Athole the chancellor, took upon him to fill his place, the estates proceeded to choose the Lords of the Articles; upon which Lindsay again broke in upon the proceedings, calling all to witness, that every act of such a parliament was null, and the choosing of the lords an empty farce. This second attack threw Morton into an ungovernable rage, in which he unsparingly abused his old associate. "Think ye, sir," said he, "that this is a court of churls or brawlers? Take your own place, and thank God that the king's youth keeps you safe from his resentment."—"I have served the king in his minority," said Lindsay, "as faithfully as the proudest among ye; and I think to serve his grace no less truly in his majority." Upon which Morton was observed to whisper something in the king's ear, who, blushing and hesitating, delivered himself of a little speech, which, no doubt, had been prepared for him beforehand. "Lest any man," said he, "should judge this not to be a free parliament, I declare it free; and those who love me will think as I think."¹

This silenced Lindsay, and the proceedings went on; but Montrose, abruptly leaving the hall, rode post to Edinburgh. It was reported that he bore a secret

¹ MS. Calderwood, British Museum, pp. 1062, 1065.

letter from the king, imploring his subjects to arm and relieve him from the tyranny of Morton. It is certain that the recusant earl drew a vivid picture of the late regent's insolence, and roused the citizens to such a pitch of fury, that they mustered in arms, and declared that they would rescue their sovereign from the hands of a traitor who had sold them to the English. Nothing could be more grateful to Argyle and Athole than such a spirit; and sending word to the townsmen, that they would speedily join them with a force which would soon bring their enemies to reason, they summoned their feudal services, and prepared for war.¹

Montrose's sudden retreat saved him from imprisonment; for next day an order of privy council appeared, commanding him and Lindsay his associate to confine themselves to their own lodgings under pain of rebellion.² In the meantime, the parliament proceeded. Morton's demission of the regency, and the king's acceptance of the government, were confirmed: an ample approval and discharge was given him of all the acts done during his regency, and a new council appointed, in which he himself sat as chief, and could, in any emergency, command a majority. The revolution was thus complete. He had lost the name of regent, but he had retained his power; and the nominal assumption of the government by the young king had removed many difficulties which before trammelled and perplexed him.³

But this daring and experienced politician had men to deal with who, having been trained in his own

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 101, Lord Hunsdon to Burghley, August 19, 1578, Berwick.

² MS. Books of Privy-council, Register-house, Edinburgh, 17th July, 1578.

³ Draft, State-paper Office, Names of the King's Ordinary Council, and Acts of Parliament of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 94.

school, were not easily put down; and scarcely had the arrangements for the new government been completed, when Argyle and Athole occupied the city of Edinburgh, and communicating with the leading ministers of the kirk, now completely estranged from Morton, assembled their forces. It was in vain that Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassador, remonstrated against this; in vain that a charge from the privy council was fulminated against the two earls, commanding them, on pain of treason, to depart from Edinburgh within twenty-four hours. Both sides flew to arms: the country, so lately restored to peace, again resounded with warlike preparation: proclamations, and counter-proclamations, were discharged against each other; summonses for their armed vassals issued in every direction; and so readily were the orders obeyed, that Argyle and Athole, who had marched out of Edinburgh on the 11th August with only one thousand men, found themselves, on mustering at Falkirk on the 13th, seven thousand strong. Of these troops the greater part were animated by the deadliest hatred of Morton, especially the hardy bands of the Merse and Teviotdale, led by their wardens, Coldingknowes and Cessford. They carried before them a banner of blue sarcenet, on which was painted a boy within a grated window, with the distich, "*Liberty I crave, and cannot it have.*"¹ This was meant to represent the king's thraldom to Morton; and below it was their answer, declaring that they would die to set him free. On the other side came Angus, who had been recently proclaimed lieutenant-

¹ MS. letter, Caligula, C. v. fol. 101, Lord Hunsdon to Burghley, Berwick, August 19, 1578. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. VIII. In these transactions the celebrated Buchanan acted as a kind of secretary of state. Calderwood, MS. fol. 1071.

general to the king, with a body of five thousand men ; and the skirmishing between the advanced parties of each army had commenced, when Sir Robert Bowes, accompanied by Lawson and Lindsay, the two principal ministers of the kirk, rode hastily from the capital, and again offered himself, in the name of his mistress the Queen of England, as a peacemaker between the rival factions.¹

In this humane office, after prolonged and bitter discussions, he was successful. The young king, or rather Morton in his name, declared, that, foreseeing the wreck and misery of the realm, if the present divisions were not speedily removed, he was ready to meet the wishes of the Queen of England ; and therefore commanded his nobility, on both sides, to disband their forces. To reassure Argyle and Athole's faction, their late conduct in taking arms was accepted as loyal service ; Argyle, Lindsay, and Morton, so recently denounced traitors, were added to the privy council ; a committee of eight noblemen was to be chosen, to advise with the king upon the best mode of reconciling his nobility ; and, from this moment, free access was to be afforded to all noblemen, barons, or gentlemen, who came to offer their service to their prince.² To these conditions both parties agreed ; and by the judicious management of Bowes, Scotland was saved for the present from the misery of civil war.

This minister, after the service he had thus performed, remained for some time resident ambassador at the Scottish court, where Morton's successful intrigues had once more established him as the chief ruler in the state ; a result which was viewed with

¹ MS. Calderwood, p. 1071.

² MS. State-paper Office, copy of the time, Articles agreed on in Scotland between the King and the Lords, 13th August, 1578.

much satisfaction by Elizabeth, who, even after his demission of his high office, had never ceased to give him the title of regent.¹ For the name, however, he cared little; it was power to which he looked; and this, having for the moment secured, he was determined not speedily again to lose. The great principles upon which he had hitherto conducted the government, were a strict amity with England, opposition to all foreign intrigue, a determined resistance to the deliverance of the Scottish queen, and a resolution to maintain the Protestant reformation. On this last important point, however, his motives had become suspected by the influential body of the ministers of the kirk. This was owing to his introduction into Scotland of the episcopal form of church government, and his resistance to the Book of Church Polity which had been drawn up by the General Assembly, and presented to the king and the three estates for their approval. Yet still, although no longer the favourite of the clergy, Morton was anti-Catholic enough to be preferred by them to Athole, a professed Roman Catholic, and his associates, who, for the most part, were either avowed or suspected Romanists; and for the present the ministers refrained from endangering the restored peace of the country by any violence of opposition.

Yet it was impossible for any acute observer not to see that the times were precarious. The elements of discord were lulled in their active efforts, but not destroyed; the intrigues of France and Spain for the deliverance of Mary, and the re-establishment of the ancient faith, were still busily carried on; and Bowes, the ambassador, who from long experience was inti-

¹ Instructions to Randolph, 31st January, 1578, Caligula, C. v. fol. 111, British Museum.

mately acquainted with the state of the rival factions, regarded the court and the country as on the eve of another change. On the 3d November, shortly previous to his leaving Scotland, he thus wrote from Edinburgh to Lord Burghley:—

“ By my common letters to the lords of her majesty’s council, the weltering estate of this realm, that now attendeth but a tide for a new alteration of the court, will appear to your lordship, and how necessary it is in this change approaching, and in the confederacies presently knitting, to get some hold for her majesty amongst them.”¹ It had been his own earnest endeavour to get such hold over them; and for this purpose he had entered into negotiations with the Earl of Caithness, one of the principal leaders of the confederacy against Morton. He and his associates had sent articles of agreement, in the usual form, to the English ambassador: but they expected also the usual gratuity, and, as it turned out, valued their devotion to Elizabeth at a higher rate than that parsimonious princess was disposed to reckon it. Caithness, indeed, was of loose and accommodating principles, both in politics and religion; and although Bowes flattered himself that, on his departure from Scotland, he had left the faction opposed to Morton very favourably disposed to England, he did not conceal from Walsingham his apprehensions that the continuance of this feeling was precarious. “ I fear,” said he, in his letter to this minister, “ that no great inwardness shall be found in them, when they find her majesty’s liberality coming slowly to them, that use not often at the fairest call to stoop to empty lure.”²

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 109, Sir R. Bowes to Burghley, Edinburgh, November 3, 1578.

² MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 110. Sir R. Bowes to ———, November 24, 1578. I suspect to Walsingham.

These apprehensions of the English minister regarding the unsettled state of Scotland were not without good foundation. Mary's indefatigable friend, the Bishop of Ross, whose intrigues in the affair of the Duke of Norfolk had already given such alarm to Elizabeth, was now busily employed on the continent, exciting France, Spain, Germany, and the papal court, to unite for her deliverance; and holding out the present crisis of affairs in Scotland as eminently favourable for the restoration of the true faith. The extent to which these operations were carried, was amply proved by a packet of intercepted letters, written in cipher, and seized by Walsingham or Burghley, whose spies and informers were scattered all over Europe. It was found that the Earl of Athole, a Roman Catholic, the great leader of the late cabal against Morton, and chancellor of Scotland, was in constant correspondence with the Bishop of Ross. The letters of the Scottish queen herself, written immediately after Morton's resignation of the regency, to the same prelate, and directed to be communicated to the pope, expressed her satisfaction at the late revolution in Scotland, and her zealous concurrence with his holiness in his project for the restitution of the true faith in Britain, by the united efforts of the great Catholic powers. She alluded, in the same letter, to a project for the carrying off her son, the young king, to the continent, which the pope had offered to forward by an advance of money. She informed him, that in consequence of the changes in Scotland since Morton's demission, she felt perfectly assured of the affection and services of the young prince, and of his counsellors; she urged the necessity of placing him, if possible, in the hands of her friends of the house of Lorraine—alluding to the imminent danger he incurred from Elizabeth's intrigues to get

possession of his person, or even to deprive him of his life. She declared her conviction, that if her son were once in France, and removed from the sphere of Elizabeth's influence, a more lenient treatment of herself would ensue; and, lastly, she directed Ross to communicate upon all these matters with the pope's nuncio at Paris.¹

In an intercepted letter, written about the same time by Beaton bishop of Glasgow, Mary's ambassador at the court of France, to the Bishop of Ross, the determination of Henry the Third and the Duke of Guise to assist her to their utmost, was clearly intimated.² In the autumn of the same year, and soon after the pacification between the rival factions in Scotland, which we have seen effected by Bowes, the Bishop of Ross made a progress into Germany, with the object of exciting the emperor and the duke of Bavaria to unite with the other Catholic powers for the speedy liberation of his royal mistress, and the restoration of religion. From both potentates he received the utmost encouragement. The emperor declared his readiness to co-operate with the endeavours of his brother princes for the deliverance of the Scottish queen, and the securing to her and her son their undoubted right to the English throne; and the duke professed his determination to peril both property and life itself for the restoration of the Catholic faith.³ This encouraging information was conveyed by Ross to the Cardinal Como, in a letter written from Prague on the 27th September, 1578, which, unfortunately

¹ MS. British Museum, ex cyphris Reginae Scotiae ad Episcopum Rossensem, Caligula, C. v. fol. 102.

² Ex literis Archiep. Glasguensis ad Episcop. Rossen. June 14, 1578. Caligula, C. v. fol. 103 d. British Museum.

³ MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 104 d. Ex literis Episcop. Rossensis ad Cardinalem Comensem, Pragæ, September 27, 1578.

for his mistress, fell into the hands of her enemies; and, at the same time, this indefatigable prelate, at the request of the emperor, had drawn up a paper on the state of parties in Scotland, in which he carefully marked the relative strength of the Roman Catholic and Protestant peers,¹ and pointed out the favourable crisis which had occurred. In a second interview, to which the emperor admitted him, he described the state of parties in Scotland, following certain directions communicated by his royal mistress;² and by all these united exertions, there is no doubt that a deep impression was made throughout Europe in favour of the Scottish queen. Well, therefore, might Sir Robert Bowes describe the condition of affairs in Scotland as one full of alarm; and before we condemn Elizabeth for her severity to Mary, we must weigh the perils to the Protestant cause which these intercepted letters so clearly demonstrated. But, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten, that these very dangers arose out of the injustice of her imprisonment.

In the meantime, Morton once more bore the chief sway in Scotland, where his triumph over the conspiracy of Athole and Argyle had really increased his power; whilst his possession of the king's person enabled him to overawe the young monarch as effectually as he had ever done when regent. This resumption of strength he now employed to crush the house of Hamilton.

The Duke of Chastelherault was dead; his eldest son, the Earl of Arran, had been insane for some years; and in these melancholy circumstances, the leaders of this potent and ancient family were his brothers, the Lord of Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton. Arbroath, in the event of the death of Mary and the young king,

¹ MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 105.

² Ibid. fol. 106.

was next heir to the throne; and his possessions were described by Bowes as the greatest and the richest in Scotland.¹ These lands were conterminous with the vast estates of the Earl of Angus, which included nearly all the "Overward" of Clydesdale, as Arbroath's did the "Netherward;" and Morton and the Douglasses had long looked upon them with greedy eyes. But although his enmity against Arbroath and his brother was entirely selfish, Morton was not guilty of injustice when he persuaded the young king that it was his duty to proceed with severity against the house of Hamilton: it had a long reckoning of crime and blood to account for. There was little doubt that the late Archbishop of St Andrews, its chief leader and adviser, had suffered justly as an accessory to the murder of Darnley; and this cast a strong suspicion of implication upon its present leaders. It was certain that they were guilty of the death of the Regent Moray; it was as undoubted that Lord Claud Hamilton had given the order which led to the murder of the Regent Lennox; and the houses of Mar and Douglas were bitterly hostile to the whole race.

The Hamiltons being thus miserably situated, the terrible work of feudal retribution commenced, and was prosecuted in the rapid and cruel spirit of the times. Morton and Angus in person besieged the castle of Hamilton, commanded by Arthur Hamilton of Merton.² He offered to surrender on being assured of his life, and pardon to himself and his garrison of all their offences, except the murder of the king and the two regents; but these terms were scornfully

¹ MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 82. Also, draft of the King's Proclamation against John Hamilton, some time Commendator of Arbroath, and Claud Hamilton, some time Commendator of Paisley, dated May 2, 1579, Bowes Papers.

² May 4, 1579.

refused, and he was at last compelled to submit unconditionally.¹ Much interest was made to save him : but Mar and Buchan, with Lochleven, and James Douglas, a natural son of Morton's, were furious at the idea of his escaping their vengeance ; declaring that the lives of any ten Hamiltons were a poor recompense for the Regent Moray. He and his company, therefore, were hanged ; amongst whom was Arthur Hamilton, a brother of Bothwellhaugh who had shot the regent, and who was known to have held the stirrup when the murderer threw himself on horseback and escaped.² The castle of Draffen, another stronghold of this great family, in which the Duchess of Chastelherault and the unfortunate Earl of Arran had taken refuge, was invested and taken about the same time, its garrison having abandoned it during the night ; and in a convention of the nobility held soon after at Stirling, it was determined to complete the ruin of this devoted house by processes of treason in the next parliament. Nothing could be more wretched than its condition at this moment : the Lord of Arbroath had fled to Flanders, where he was an almost houseless exile ; Lord Claud escaped to England, and threw himself upon the compassion of Elizabeth ; its lesser chiefs were trembling under an impending sentence of forfeiture ; and its head, the Earl of Arran, whose royal descent and great power had made him, in former days, an almost accepted suitor, first of Elizabeth, and afterwards of Mary, was a prisoner, hope-

¹ MS. letter to Sir George Bowes, from (as I suspect) Mr Archibald Douglas, Edinburgh, May 24, 1579, copy of the time, Bowes Papers.

² MS. British Museum, Occurrences out of Scotland, May 14, 1579, and May 24, 1579, Caligula, C. v. fol. 120, copy. Also, MS. letter, May 9, Bowes Papers. Also, MS. *ibid.* Caligula, C. v. fol. 122, Notes of Occurrences, 1st June, 1579. Also, MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough's Catalogue, 4735, fol. 1083.

lessly insane, and placed, with his unhappy mother the duchess, under the charge of Captain Lammie, a soldier of fierce and brutal habits, and a determined enemy of the house of Hamilton. Yet these accumulated miseries do not appear to have excited the slightest degree of sympathy in this unfeeling age; and when Elizabeth, compassionating the misfortunes of the Hamiltons, despatched her envoy, Captain Arrington, to plead their cause at the Scottish court, he found the young king, and the whole body of the nobility, inflamed with the deepest hatred against them, expressing a conviction that their restoration would be dangerous to his person, and resolute against their pardon or return.¹

In the midst of these cruel transactions, Athole the chancellor, and the great leader of the confederacy against Morton, died suddenly, under circumstances of much suspicion.² He had just returned from a banquet, given by Morton at Stirling to commemorate the reconciliation of the nobles; and the symptoms of poison so strongly indicated themselves both before and after death, that his friends did not hesitate to say publicly, that he had met with foul play from the ex-regent, who, however, treated the report with contempt. The body was opened, and examined by a learned circle of "mediciners, surgeons, and

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Nicholas Arrington to Burghley, October 10, 1579, Berwick. Caligula, C. v. fol. 130. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. IX.

² He died at Kincardine castle, near Auchterarder, on the north side of the Ochils, a stronghold of the Earl of Montrose, on the 25th April, 1579. "The whole friends of the dead are convened at Dunkeld upon the 3d of May, where the young Earls of Athole and Montrose put in deliberation what were best way to come by revenge of this heinous fact." MS. letter, 5th May, 1579, without a signature, to Sir George Bowes, enclosed in a letter to Mr Archibald Douglas. Bowes Papers. Also, MS. letter, Bowes Papers, — to Sir R. Bowes. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. X.

poticaries;” but they disagreed in their verdict. By some the poison was so plainly detected, that they declared there was not a doubt upon the subject; whilst Dr Preston, the most eminent physician of the time, was equally positive that there was no poison in the case,—certainly none in the stomach. On being irritated by contradiction, however, he had the temerity to touch a portion of its contents with his tongue, and, to the triumph of his dissentient brethren, almost died in consequence, nor did he ever completely recover the unlucky experiment.¹ In the meantime, though the dark report was thus strengthened, Morton’s power, and the absence of all direct proof, protected him from any farther proceedings.

Some time after this, the General Assembly of the Kirk met at Edinburgh; and having chosen Mr Thomas Smeton for their moderator, at his request appointed a council of the brethren to advise with him upon matters of importance. To this council Mr Thomas Duncanson, minister of the royal household, presented a letter from the young king, which contained a request, that the Assembly would at present abstain from debating upon such matters touching the polity of the Kirk, as in a former conference had been referred for debate and decision to the estates of parliament. The same letter informed them, that parliament would shortly meet and take these matters into consideration; and it expressed the king’s hope, that, in the mean season, the Assembly would exert themselves to promote peace and godly living, not only amongst their own members, but throughout the whole body of the subjects of the realm; so that the expectations of such busy meddlers as were enemies to the public tranquillity, should be disappointed.

¹ MS. Calderwood, British Museum, pp. 1083, 1084.

The Assembly having taken this royal letter into consideration, in its turn appointed a committee of their brethren, the principal of whom were Erskine of Dun, Duncanson the king's minister, and Andrew Melvil, to wait upon the king, with some requests to which they besought his attention. These were, that he would interdict all parents, under heavy penalties, from sending their children to be educated at the university of Paris, or other foreign colleges professing papistry; that he would cause the university of St Andrews, some of whose professors had recently left the Protestant communion, to be reformed in all its colleges and foundations; and take order for the banishment of Jesuits, whom the Assembly denominated "the pestilent dregs of a most detestable idolatry." They further besought him to proceed to a farther conference upon such points of church polity as had been left undetermined at the last conference at Stirling, and to desist from controlling or suspending, by his royal letters, any of the decrees of the General Assembly.¹ Calderwood, the zealous and able historian of the Scottish Kirk, has pronounced a high eulogium upon the learning, holiness, and unanimity of this Assembly.²

Not long after this, Esmé Stewart, commonly called Monsieur D'Aubigny, cousin to the king, and a youth of graceful figure and accomplishments, arrived in Scotland.³ He was the son of John Stewart, brother of Matthew earl of Lennox, the late regent, and had scarce been a week at court when he became a great

¹ MS. Calderwood, sub anno 1579, British Museum, Ayscough's Catalogue, 4735, p. 1092.

² Ibid. fol. 1092.

³ On the 8th September, 1579. MS. letter, Bowes Papers, an anonymous correspondent, whose mark is 4°, to Sir G. Bowes, 9th September.

favourite with his royal relative. It was immediately whispered, that he had been sent over by the Guises, to fill Athole's place as leader of the French faction, and to act as a counterpoise to the predominating influence of Morton. He was accompanied by Monsieur Momberneau, and Mr Henry Ker, — the first a man of great wit and liveliness, gay, gallant, and excelling in all the sports and pastimes to which the young monarch was partial; the second, Ker, of a more subtle and retired character, — who had been long a confidential servant of D'Aubigny's, and was strongly suspected by the ministers of the Kirk to be a secret agent of the Guises.

All this excited the fears of Elizabeth; and the information sent her by her secret agents, both in Scotland and France, was by no means calculated to remove her apprehension. As D'Aubigny and his friends, however, acted as yet with great caution and reserve, the queen contented herself, for the moment, with a mission of observation and inquiry; for which she selected Captain Nicolas Arrington, a brave and intelligent officer of the garrison of Berwick, who had already been repeatedly employed in Scotland. His open instructions were to intercede with James for some favour to the Hamiltons; his more secret orders, to acquaint himself with the character and intentions of D'Aubigny, the state of parties, and what projects were then agitated for the young king's marriage. On the first point, the pardon, or at least the more lenient punishment of the house of Hamilton, he prevailed nothing, so deep was James's hatred, or perhaps more truly that of Morton, against it. With regard to the marriage, Arrington informed Burghley, that neither the council nor D'Aubigny had yet made any formal proposal upon the subject. "It was evident,"

he said, "that the young French stranger had already won the affection of his royal kinsman, and might look for high preferment," probably to be Earl of Lennox, with a large share of the forfeited lands of the Hamiltons, if he could be prevailed upon to change his religion.¹

The old soldier who thus wrote to Burghley, requested his indulgence, should his information prove incorrect, as he had been more familiar with "another weapon than the pen;" but the course of events soon proved the accuracy of his intelligence. Wherever James went, he insisted on having D'Aubigny beside him. When he removed, for the purpose of holding his parliament, from Stirling to Holyrood, his graceful cousin had splendid apartments provided for him in the palace, next to the royal bed-chamber; and in the sports and pageants with which the citizens received their monarch, the favourite, for so he was now declared, found himself universally regarded and courted. The expensive scale on which these civic festivities were conducted, evinced a remarkable increase in the national wealth. They exhibited the usual confusion of classical, feudal, and religious machinery; in which "Dame Musick," attended by four fair virgins representing the cardinal virtues, and the provost and three hundred citizens, clad in velvet and satin, enacted their parts with great assiduity and success. Whilst the 20th Psalm was being sung, a little child emerged from a silver globe, which opened artificially over the king's head, and fluttering down to his majesty's feet, presented him with the keys of the city. Religion, a grave matron, then conducted him into the High Church; and thence, after hearing sermon, the

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 130, Nicolas Arrington to Burghley, October 10, 1579, Berwick.

monarch and the congregation repaired to the Market Cross, where Bacchus sat on a gilded puncheon, with his painted garments and a flowery garland : the fountains ran wine ; the principal street of the city was hung with tapestry ; and, at the conclusion of the procession, the town presented the king with a cupboard of plate, valued, says a minute chronicler, at six thousand merks.¹

These pageants were introductory to the parliament which assembled on the 20th of October, and, as had been anticipated by Arrington, was principally occupied with the proscription of the Hamiltons, and the exaltation of D'Aubigny. The Lord Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton, with many more of the same name and house, were proclaimed traitors, and their estates forfeited ; whilst all who had been partakers in the slaughter of the two regents, Moray and Lennox, were commanded, under pain of death, to remove six miles from court. On the other hand, the king conferred the earldom of Lennox upon his favourite, and presented him, at the same time, with the rich abbacy of Arbroath. Not long after, the stream of royal favour flowed still more munificently : he was made chamberlain for Scotland ; his earldom, it was reported, would be soon erected into a dukedom ; and he was so caressed by the young sovereign, that Argyle and many of the principal nobility began not only to treat him with high consideration, but, according to the common usage of the times, to enter into those bands or covenants by which they bound themselves to his service, and with which the reader of this history is already so well acquainted.²

¹ Moyse's Memoirs, Bannatyne edition, p. 25. Also, MS. Calderwood, British Museum, vol. ii. p. 1099. Historie of James the Sext, p. 179, Bannatyne edition.

² MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 133, and also 135,

Morton, however, and the ministers of the Kirk, still kept aloof: the one animated by that proud and haughty feeling which prompted him rather to crush than to court a rival: the ministers, from the horror with which they regarded all Roman Catholics, and the suspicions they had from the first entertained that D'Aubigny was a secret emissary of the pope and the Guises. When these fears were once excited, the churches resounded with warnings against the dark machinations of popery; and the pulpit, as had frequently happened in these times, became a political engine. It was recollected that the Duke of Guise had accompanied D'Aubigny to Dieppe, and remained with him for many hours in secret conference in the ship; D'Aubigny had been known, also, to have had consultations with the Bishops of Glasgow and Ross;¹ and for what purpose (so the ministers argued) could the forty thousand crowns, which he brought with him, be so naturally applied as in corrupting the Protestant nobles? Nay, was it not known that a part had already found its way into the coffers of the Lady Argyle; and did not all men see the warm and sudden friendship between her husband the earl and the favourite?²

Amid these suspicions and jealousies the year 1579 passed away; and it was apparent to all who regarded the state of the country with attention, that it could not long remain without some sudden change or convulsion. The king was wretchedly poor; and the revenues of the crown, during his minority, had been plundered and dilapidated to such an extent, that he

Bowes to Burghley, October 22, 1579, Berwick. Lennox was created Earl of Lennox (Douglas, vol. ii. p. 99) on March 5, 1579-80.

¹ State-paper Office, French Correspondence, Paulet to Walsingham, August 29, 1579, Paris.

² MS. Calderwood, British Museum, sub anno 1579, fol. 1098.

could not raise three thousand pounds to defray the expenses of his household. The nobility, on the other hand, were rich ; they had prospered as the crown had sunk ; and so determined were they to hold fast their gains, that they “ would spare nothing they possessed to the king’s aid, without deadly feud.”¹ It had been earnestly recommended, that the king’s person, in those unsettled times, should be defended by a body-guard, and that six privy councillors, in rotation, should always remain with the court ; but no funds could be raised to pay the soldiers’ wages ; the councillors refused to support a table for themselves ; no money was forthcoming elsewhere ; and the king was frequently left almost alone, without court or council around him ; a state of destitution which, it was justly apprehended, might lead to the most dangerous results.

When Elphinston, abbot of Dunfermline, was sent to England, in the preceding summer,² his main purpose was to explain to the queen the poverty under which the young prince had entered on his government ; the great insecurity of his person, surrounded as he daily was by men “ who had dipped their hands in the blood of his parents and dearest kinsfolks ;” and the absolute necessity for a supply of money to pay the expenses of his guards and household.³ But Elizabeth could not be induced to advance any supplies ; and these evils and dangers had ever since been on the increase. Since the arrival of Lennox, too, the feuds amongst the nobility had risen to an alarming height. Morton, jealous of the new favourite, and

¹ MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 155, copy, Memorial of the present state of Scotland, December 31, 1579.

² July 30, 1578.

³ MS. State-paper Office, Demands of the Abbot of Dunfermline, Ambassador from the King of Scots, 30th July, 1578.

animated by a hatred of Argyle, absented himself from court; the powerful border septs of the Humes and Cars regarded the ex-regent with the deadliest rancour; Elphinston, the king's secretary, a man of talent, and long his firm friend, was now estranged from him; and even the potent Angus, his nephew and his heir, kept at a safe distance, and watched events. But Morton's great wealth, his energy, courage, and experience, made him still a formidable enemy; and they who most wished his downfall, knew not on what side to attack him. The young king, in the meantime, who had always felt an awe for the late regent, became daily more devoted to Lennox, whom, with a boyish enthusiasm, and a precocious display of theology, he was labouring to convert from what he esteemed his religious errors. He gave him books of controversy, brought him to attend the sermons of the ministers, procured one of the mildest and most learned of their number to instruct him, and so far succeeded, that, if not converted, he was reported to be favourably inclined to the Protestant church. Any sudden recantation would have been suspicious; and, meanwhile, his royal and youthful mentor congratulated himself upon his favourite's hopeful and inquiring state.¹

Amid these cares and controversies a sudden rumour arose, none could tell from what quarter, that the Earl of Morton had plotted to seize the king and carry him to Dalkeith. How this was to be effected, no one could tell; but James, who had ridden out on a hunting expedition, precipitately interdicted the sports, and galloped back to Stirling castle. Morton loudly declared his innocence, and defied his calum-

¹ MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 2, Captain Arrington to Burghley, 4th April, 1580, Stirling.

niators to bring their proofs; yet scarcely had this challenge been given, when the court was again thrown into terror and confusion, by news secretly brought to the Earl of Mar, that Lennox and his faction had fixed on the night of the 10th April to invade the royal apartments, lay hands on the king, hurry him to Dunbarton, and thence transport him to France.¹ It was whispered, also, that a deep confederacy had been formed against the Earl of Morton by the same junto: that Sir James Balfour, now a fugitive in France, and one who was well known to have been a chief accomplice in the murder of the king's father, had promised to purchase his pardon, by giving up the bond for the murder, signed by Morton's own hand; and that thus there was every hope of bringing the hoary and blood-stained tyrant to the scaffold, which had so long waited for him.

In the midst of these ominous rumours, the night of the 10th April arrived, and all in the castle prepared for an attack. Mar permitted none to see the king; soldiers were stationed within and without the royal chamber; and a shout arising, that Lennox ought to be thrust out of the gates, he shut himself up in his apartments, with a strong guard of his friends, armed at all points, and swore that he would set upon any that dared invade him. In the morning, Argyle, Sutherland, Glencairn, and other adherents of Lennox, hurried to Stirling, but were refused admittance to the castle; and their fears for Lennox increased, when they heard it reported, that Morton was on the road to join his party. All was thus in terror and uncertainty: men gazed, trembled, and whispered fearfully amongst each other, aware that secret plots

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 8, Captain Arrington to Lord Burghley, 16th April, 1580, Berwick.

were busily concocting; that the ground they stood on was being mined: and yet none could tell where the blow would fall, or when the train might be exploded. At this moment Captain Arrington, Elizabeth's envoy, was in Stirling castle, and thus wrote to Burghley: "The young king is in heavy case, and much amazed with these troubles, and the more by reason of his great affection towards D'Aubigny, whom he perceives the mark they shoot at. Monsieur D'Aubigny, with his faction, doth offer to abide the trial by law, or otherwise, in their very persons, that there was never any such plot or meaning by him, or his consent, or by any others to their knowledge, to have drawn the king either to Dunbarton or any other sinister course."¹

It is difficult to arrive at the truth amidst these conflicting accusations of the two factions. Elizabeth certainly had received a warning from her ambassador in France, that there was a design on foot to have the young king brought thither; and Morton had probably been encouraged by the English queen to prevent it by every possible means.² Lennox, on the other hand, although he indignantly, and probably truly, repelled any such treasonable intentions, avowed his wish to reform the council, and protect the king from the pillage of the blood-suckers of the royal revenue, who had been thrust into their offices by Morton and Mar. In this project James himself appears to have borne a part; and had probably intended, under pretence of a hunting party at the Doune of Menteith, to have escaped from the tutelage of Mar, and accomplished a

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 7, Arrington to Walsingham or Burghley, 10th April, 1580, Stirling. The address of the letter is torn away.

² Ibid. fol. 17 and 18, copy, Lord Treasurer and Walsingham to Mr Robert Bowes, April 17, 1580.

revolution in the court.¹ The secret project, however, was discovered, and defeated by the vigilance of the house of Erskine.

In the meantime, the picture drawn by Arrington, of the dangerous state of the country, threw Elizabeth into alarm, and she immediately despatched Sir Robert Bowes to Stirling. His instructions were to strengthen, by every means, the decaying influence of Morton; to declare the queen's willingness to gain some of the chief in authority by pensions; to pull down the power of Lennox; to plead for the pardon of the Hamiltons; and thoroughly to sift the truth of the late rumours of a conspiracy for carrying off the young king. Bowes also, before he set out, received a letter from Secretary Walsingham, recommending him to use the utmost vigilance in this mission. This, he said, was most necessary, as it was already reported in Spain, that mass was set up once more in Scotland, and arms taken against the Protestants; and, as he knew for certain that Kerr of Fernyhirst, a Roman Catholic and an active friend of the Scottish queen, with Bothwellhaugh, the blood-stained Hamilton who had shot the Regent Moray, had recently ridden post from France into Spain.²

On reaching court, the ambassador was received by the young king with great courtesy: but James's manner instantly changed when any allusion was made to the Hamiltons; and it was evident to all that Bowes' exertions on this head would be unavailing.³ It was apparent, also, that the revival of Morton's former power promised to be a matter of extreme difficulty. He

¹ British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 29, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 10, 1580, Stirling.

² Draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, May 3, 1580.

³ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 25, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 3, 1580, Stirling.

himself was so completely convinced of the strength of his enemies, and the deep estrangement of the king, that he had resolved to retire altogether from public affairs. In a secret conference, held in the night, with Bowes, at Stirling castle, the ex-regent expressed much doubt whether it was not too late to attempt any thing against Lennox, who now professed himself a Protestant, and had so completely conciliated the ministers of the Kirk, that they addressed a letter in his commendation to the council.¹

As to the late rumoured conspiracies for carrying off the king, the ambassador found it difficult to discover the truth; but he was witness to a strange scene of violence and brawling before the council, in which Morton, Mar, and Lennox, gave the lie to their accusers; and the king, with much feeling and good sense, exerted himself to restore peace: a striking contrast, no doubt, to Bowes' experience of the decorous gravity and awe preserved by Elizabeth in her council, in which the highest nobles generally spoke upon their knees, and none but her majesty was permitted to lose temper. On the subject of the alleged plot of Lennox, James was at first reserved, although he expressed much love and admiration for Elizabeth; but the ambassador at last gained his confidence, and drew from him many particulars, which showed that the conspiracy, intended to have been carried into effect at Doune castle, involved the ruin of Morton, the dismissal of Mar and other obnoxious councillors, and a complete reconstruction of the government under Lennox and Argyle. As it appeared, also, that Sir John Seton, Sir George Douglas, and some of the captive queen's most attached servants, were to have been brought into the council, Bowes at

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 31, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 10, 1580, Stirling.

once suspected that the design originated in France, and that Lennox and his youthful sovereign acted under the influence of the Guises. He was the more persuaded of this, when Morton assured him that, since D'Aubigny's arrival, the king's feelings had undergone a great change in favour of that country.

But the time called for action, not for speculation; and on consulting with his friends, regarding the most likely means of averting the dangers threatened by this alarming state of things, there were many conflicting opinions. It was recommended to have tried councillors about the king, and a strong body-guard to prevent surprise; as it had been remarked, that the late alarms and plots had all broken out when there was scarce a single councillor at court who could be depended upon. Yet this could not be done without money; and where was money to be had in the present exhausted state of the royal revenue?¹ Soon after this, the ambassador took an opportunity of seeing the young king alone, and delivering a secret message from Elizabeth, upon a subject of the deepest interest to both: his succession to the English crown after her death. The particulars of the interview, and the answer given by James, were communicated in cipher, in a letter of which the address is now lost, but which was written probably to Burghley or Walsingham, his usual correspondents when the subject was of high moment. "In private with the king," so wrote the ambassador, "I have offered to acquaint him with a secret greatly importing him and his estate, and lately discovered to me by letters, which were not out of the way in case he should desire sight thereof; and, taking his honour

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 24 and 27, inclusive, and fol. 28 and 32, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, May 3, 1580. The same to the same, May 10, 1580.

in pledge for the secrecy, which he readily tendered, I opened to him, at large, all the contents specified in the cipher note last sent to me, and to be communicated to him, persuading him earnestly to beware that he made not himself the cause of greater loss to him, than France, Scotland, or Lennox, could counter-vail. He appeared here to be very much perplexed; affirming that he would both most chiefly follow her majesty's advice, and also ask and require her counsel in all his great adoes. * * * In which good resolution and mind," continued Bowes, "I left him; wherein with good company and handling I think he may be well continued. But Lennox having won great interest in him, and possessing free and sure access to him at all times, * * I dare not, therefore, assure, in his tender years, any long continuance or sure performance of this promise." ¹ These anticipations of James's fickleness proved to be well founded; for neither the prize held out by Elizabeth, nor all the efforts of Bowes, could retain the monarch in his good resolutions. The influence of Lennox and his friends became daily more predominant; his youthful master's arguments on the errors of the church of Rome, seconded by the expositions of the Presbyterian clergy, had, as he affirmed, convinced him; he had publicly avowed his conversion to Protestantism, and had signed the articles of religion drawn up by the Scottish clergy. His enemies were thus deprived of their principal ground of complaint and alarm; and although they accused him of insincerity,—and certainly the circumstances under which this recantation was made were suspicious,—still, as he afterwards

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, original, cipher and decipher. The letter contains proof that its date must be May 16 or 17, 1580.

died professing himself a Protestant, we have every reason to believe his assertions to have been sincere.¹

But whether at this moment sincere or interested, Lennox's conversion, and consequent increase of power, placed Morton, and the other old friends of England, in a dangerous predicament. Had they been assured of immediate support, they were ready, they said, to resist the intrigues of France, which became every day more successful, the Bishops of Ross and Glasgow keeping up a correspondence with Lennox. But Elizabeth, as Walsingham confessed to Bowes, was so completely occupied and entangled with the negotiations for her marriage with the Duke of Anjou, that every other subject was postponed. No answer, which promised any certain assistance, arrived; and Morton, wearied out and irritated with this neglect, declared to the ambassador, that he would be constrained to provide for his personal safety by a reconciliation with Lennox. "He utterly distrusted," he said, "Elizabeth's intention to be at any charges for the affairs of Scotland; his own peril was great and imminent; yet, had he been backed by England, he would have adventured to beard his enemies, and to have retained the country at the devotion of the queen. It was too late now; and to save himself from ruin, he would be driven to means which could be profitable to neither of the realms, and were much against his heart."² Bowes soon after was recalled from Scotland.³

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 36, Bowes to Burghley and Walsingham, Edinburgh, May 16, 1580.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, August 2, 1580.

³ On the 2d August he seems to have been at Edinburgh; on the 10th August he was at Berwick.

CHAP. V.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1580—1582.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>England.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Germany.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Portugal.</i>	<i>Pope.</i>
Elizabeth.	Henry III.	Rudolph II.	Philip II.	Philip II.	Gregory XIII.

For some time after this, Elizabeth's policy towards Scotland was of that vacillating and contradictory kind which estranged her friends and gave confidence to her opponents. She had been early warned by Sir Robert Bowes, then resident at Berwick, of the great strength of the confederacy at the head of which Lennox had placed himself, and that soon no efforts would avail against it.¹ "Such had been," he said, "the success of the French intrigues, that Scotland was running headlong the French course;"² and that every thing tended to the overthrow of religion, by which we must understand him as meaning the Presbyterian party in that country. "Still," he added, "all was not irrecoverable, if the queen would dismiss her parsimony, and take the true way to secure friends." But

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, June 27, 1580, Bowes to Walsingham. Also, September 1, 1580, Walsingham to Bowes. Also, September 6, 1580, Bowes to Walsingham; and September 18, 1580, Walsingham to Bowes, orig. draft.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, August 10, 1580.

Elizabeth was deaf to these remonstrances. She alternately flattered, remonstrated, and threatened; but she resolutely refused to "go to any charges;" and the effects of her indecision and neglect were soon apparent.¹

Lennox grew daily more formidable. As he was supported by the favour of the king, and the countenance and money of France, he drew into his party the most powerful of the nobility. His possessions and landed property were already great. Favour after favour was bestowed. Himself, or his friends and retainers, held some of the strongest castles in Scotland; and not long after this, Walsingham, who was anxiously watching his power, heard with dismay, from Bowes, that Dunbarton, one of the most important keys of the kingdom, was to be delivered to the favourite.²

This last determination incensed Elizabeth to the highest pitch. She had for some time been engaged in a secret correspondence with the captain of the castle, the noted Cunningham of Drumwhassel, who had promised to retain it at her devotion; and on the first intimation that it was to be placed in the hands of Lennox, she ordered Sir Robert Bowes to ride post from Berwick into Scotland, with a fiery message, to be delivered to the Scottish council. The imperious and unscrupulous temper of the queen was strongly marked in his instructions. If he found the fortress (for so its great strength entitled it to be called) undelivered, he was to remonstrate loudly against its being surrendered to one who, whatever mask the pope

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, draft, Walsingham to Bowes, 31st August, 1580; and same to same, August 10, 1580. Also, orig. draft, Elizabeth to Morton, June 22, 1580; and Bowes to Walsingham, July 9, 1580. Also, orig. draft, Walsingham to Bowes, 1st June, 1580.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham and Burghley, August 31, 1580.

allowed him to wear, was in his heart an enemy to the gospel. If it was too late, and the castle already given up, he was instantly to confer with Morton how so fatal a step could be remedied: "either," to quote the words of the instructions "by laying violent hands on the duke and his principal associates, in case no other more temperate course can be found, or by some other way that by him might be thought meet."¹

Bowes hurried on to Edinburgh, met with Morton, whom he found still bold, and ready to engage in any attack upon his rival; and had already given him "some comfort to prick him on"—meaning, no doubt, an advance in money, when new letters arrived from the queen. A single day had revived her parsimony, and cooled her resentment: it would be better, she thought, to try persuasion first, and forbear advising force, or any promise of assistance. None could answer for the consequences of a civil war: they might seize the young king, carry him to Dunbarton, and thence transport him to France.²

Bowes was directed, at the same time, to alarm James's fears, for a second time, on the subject of the succession; to assure him, in great secrecy, that if he continued obstinately to prefer D'Aubigny's persuasions to the counsels of his mistress, his right would be cut off by an act of parliament, and the title to the English throne established in the person of another.³ This threat, however, had been so often repeated, that it produced not the slightest effect; and Elizabeth soon after recalled her ambassador, commanding him, before he left the Scottish court, to upbraid the king

¹ Orig. draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, August 30, 1580. Endorsed by Walsingham's hand, "My letter to Mr Bowes."

² MS. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, September 1, 1580.

³ State-paper Office, copy, Walsingham to Bowes, Sept. 10, 1580.

with his ingratitude. His farewell interview was a stormy one. His royal mistress, he said, was bitterly mortified to find that this was all the return for her care of James ever since his cradle. She had little expected to be treated with contempt, and to see promoted to credit and honour the very man against whom she had expressed so much suspicion and dislike; but hereafter, he might find what it was to prefer a Duke of Lennox before a Queen of England.¹

This retirement of Bowes greatly strengthened D'Aubigny. The young king became more attached to the interests of France; he entered into communication with his mother, the imprisoned queen;² and whilst the courts of Rome, Paris, and Madrid, united their endeavours to procure her liberty, Lennox persuaded James to second their efforts, and to overwhelm their opponents by a mighty stroke. This was the destruction of Morton, the bitterest enemy of the Scottish queen, and whose recent intrigues with the English ambassador had shown that, although his power was diminished, his will to work their ruin was as active as before. Their plot against him, which had been in preparation for some time, was now ripe for execution, and it was determined to arraign him as guilty of the murder of Darnley. That he had been an active agent in the conspiracy against that unhappy prince, was certain; and that Archibald Douglas, another powerful member of the house of Douglas, had been personally present at the murder, was well known; but this could be said of others who had escaped prosecution; and as to Morton, although shorn of much

¹ Orig. draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, Oct. 7, 1580. The title of duke here given by Walsingham to Lennox, seems premature. Lennox was not created a duke till August, 1581. See *postea*, p. 298.

² See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XI.

of his power and lustre, he was still so dreaded, that no one, for many years, had dared to whisper an accusation against him. The arrival of Lennox, however, had changed the scene ; and this new favourite of his sovereign was now risen to such a height of power, that, finding the late regent intriguing with Elizabeth against him, he determined to pull down and destroy his enemy at once.

For this purpose many things then assisted. Morton had quarrelled with the Kirk, and lost the confidence of its ministers ; he was hated by the people for his avarice and severe exactions during his regency ; and his steady adherence to England had made him odious to the friends of the imprisoned queen and the party of France. Lennox, therefore, had every hope of success ; and to effect his purpose, he employed a man well calculated to cope with such an antagonist. This was James Stewart, captain of the Royal Guard, and second son of Lord Ochiltree, who had already risen into great favour with the king, and was afterwards destined to act a noted part in the history of the country. Stewart had received a learned education ; and from the principles of his father, and his near connexion with Knox, who had married his sister, was probably destined for the church. But his daring and ambitious character threw him into active life : he embraced the profession of arms, served as a soldier of fortune in the wars of France and Sweden, visited Russia, and afterwards returned to his own country, where he soon won the confidence of the young king and the Duke of Lennox, by his noble presence and elegant accomplishments. Beneath these lighter attractions, however, he concealed a mind utterly reckless and licentious in its principles, confident and courageous to excess, intolerant of the opinions of other men, and

unscrupulous as to the means he adopted to raise himself into power.

To this man, then only beginning to develop these qualities, was committed the bold task of arraigning Morton; and to obtain complete proof of his guilt, it was arranged that Sir James Balfour, who was believed to have in his possession the bond for Darnley's murder, and who was himself a principal assassin, should come secretly from France and exhibit this paper with Morton's signature attached to it.

In this last scene of his life, the ex-regent exhibited the hereditary pride and courage of the house of Douglas. He had been warned of the danger he incurred, and the storm which was about to burst over his head, two days before, when hunting with the king: but he derided it; and on the last of December, the day on which he fell into the toils, took his place, as usual, at the council table, where the king presided. After some unimportant business, the usher suddenly entered and declared that Captain James Stewart was at the door, and earnestly craved an audience. The request was immediately granted; and Stewart, advancing to the table, fell on his knees, and instantly accused Morton of the king's murder. "My duty to your highness," said he, addressing the king, "has brought me here to reveal a wickedness that has been too long obscured. It was that man, (pointing to the earl,) now sitting at this table, a place he is unworthy to occupy, that conspired your royal father's death. Let him be committed for trial, and I shall make good my words."¹

Amidst the amazement and confusion occasioned by this sudden and bold impeachment, the only person

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham and Burghley, January 1, 1580-1.

unmoved was Morton himself. Rising from his seat, he cast a momentary and disdainful glance upon his accuser, and then firmly regarding the king, "I know not," he said, "by whom this informer has been set on, and it were easy for one of my rank to refuse all reply to so mean a person; but I stand upon my innocence, I fear no trial. The rigour with which I have prosecuted all suspected of that murder is well known; and when I have cleared myself, it will be for your majesty to determine what they deserve who have sent this perjured tool of theirs to accuse me!" These bitter terms Stewart threw back upon the earl with equal contempt and acrimony. "It is false, utterly false," he replied, "that any one has instigated me to make this accusation. A horror for the crime, and zeal for the safety of my sovereign, have been my only counselors; and as to his pretended zeal against the guilty, let me ask him, where has he placed Archibald Douglas his cousin? That most infamous of men, who was an actor in the tragedy, is now a senator, promoted to the highest seat of justice, and suffered to pollute that tribunal before which he ought to have been arraigned as the murderer of his prince."¹

This scene had begun calmly; but as these last words were uttered, Stewart had sprung upon his feet, and Morton laid his hand upon his sword, when Lords Lindsay and Cathcart threw themselves between them, and prevented a personal encounter.² The king then commanded both to be removed; and, after a brief consultation, the justice-clerk, who sat at the council table, having declared that, on a charge of treason, the accused must instantly be warded,

¹ Spottiswood, p. 310.

² Harleian, 6999, fols. 3, 4, 5. Bowes to Walsingham, January 7, Berwick, 1580-1.

Morton was first shut up in the palace, and after one day's interval, committed to the castle of Edinburgh. Even there, however, he was not deemed secure from a rescue; and his enemies were not contented till they had lodged him within the strong fortress of Dunbarton, of which Lennox, his great enemy, was governor.¹

On the same day that the ex-regent was committed, the council ordered his cousin, Archibald Douglas, to be seized; and Hume of Manderston, with a party of horse, rode furiously all night to his castle of Morham: but Douglas had escaped, a few hours before, across the English border, having received warning from his friend the Laird of Lang-Niddry, who rode two horses to death in bringing him the news.² Lennox and his faction, however, had made sure of their principal victim; and all was now headlong haste to hurry on his trial, and have the tragedy completed, before any interruption could be made, or any succour arrive. Yet this was not easily accomplished. The story of his seizure had effectually roused Elizabeth. Randolph was despatched, on the spur of the moment, to carry a violent remonstrance to the king; and Lord Hunsdon, her cousin, a proud and fiery soldier, received orders to raise the power of the north, and lead an army into Scotland.³

But the envoy, on his arrival at Edinburgh,⁴ found it more difficult to revive a party for the delivery of Morton than he had anticipated. Matters were there

¹ Calderwood, MS. Hist. British Museum, Ayscough, sub anno 1581, fol. 1115. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Randolph, January 25, 1580-1.

² MS. Calderwood, sub anno 1581, fol. 1116.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Randolph, Jan. 8, 1580-1.

⁴ January 18, 1580-1.

in so violent a state, and the English alliance so unpopular, that he dreaded assassination; and prayed Walsingham, who had addressed him as an envoy, to vouchsafe him the name of an ambassador, if it were merely for protection, and to save him from personal violence.¹ On sounding the dispositions of the leading men, they appeared coldly affected. The Earl of Angus, indeed, Morton's nearest kinsman, was ready to peril all in the effort to save him; but he stood alone. The rest of the nobles were either banded with Lennox, or held themselves aloof, till Hunsdon's soldiers should be seen crossing, and not threatening to cross the border, and till Randolph had begun to pay them in better coin than promises. They had been so often deceived by the artful diplomacy of the English queen—she had already so frequently incited them to take arms, under a promise of assistance, and left them when it was too late to retreat—that they were full of distrust and suspicion. Nor was the audience with the young king in any way more encouraging. James had been irritated on Randolph's first arrival, by his refusal to have any intercourse with his favourite Lennox;² and when the envoy attempted to justify himself, and offered to prove, by the production of an intercepted letter, that he was an agent of Rome and the house of Guise, and carried on a secret intelligence with the enemies of both kingdoms, the monarch answered with much spirit, that Lennox was an honourable nobleman, his own near kinsman, and that the accusation was perfectly false. He had come from motives of affection

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, January 22, 1580-1, Sunday. He arrived in Edinburgh on Wednesday the 18th January, 1580-1.

² MS. State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, January 22, 1580-1, Edinburgh, Sunday.

to visit him; and as for the intercepted letter he spoke of, from the Bishop of Glasgow to the pope, if any such existed, it was either a forgery, or a design of that prelate for Lennox's ruin. "The bishop's character," said James, "is well known; he is my declared traitor and rebel; a favourer and kinsman of the Hamiltons, the mortal foes of the house of Lennox; and no one would be more likely than Beaton to think his labour well bestowed, if, by his letters and intrigues, he might cause me to suspect and discard my kinsman, who has embraced the true religion, and is zealous for my honour and interest. On this head," he added, "the duke is anxious for the fullest investigation, and will refuse no manner of trial to justify himself from so false a slander; and as to the trial of Morton," he concluded, "my good sister cannot be more solicitous on that head than I myself. But what would she have? Can she complain, that a man, accused in my own presence of the murder of my father, has been imprisoned till the evidence be collected against him; or is it reasonable to be angry because the day of trial is not fixed, when she is aware that Archibald Douglas, a principal witness, has fled into England, and that, till the Queen of England delivers him up, Morton cannot possibly be arraigned?"¹

To all this Randolph had little to reply; and every day convinced him more deeply than the preceding, that Morton's fate was sealed. Elizabeth, indeed, had at first talked proudly and authoritatively of her determination to save him; and her ministers and soldiers borrowed her tone. Walsingham declared to Randolph, that if a hair of Morton's head were

¹ MS. State-paper Office, the King of Scots' and his Council's Answer to Mr Randolph, February 7, 1580-1.

touched, it would cost the Queen of Scots her life.¹ Hunsdon addressed to the same ambassador a blustering epistle, anticipating his speedy invasion of Scotland, and full of threats against the "petty fellows" who were about the King of Scots.² Leicester, whose opinion ought to have had still greater weight, expressed himself in ominous and warning words: alluding to the dreadful fate of Darnley, "Let that young king take heed," said he. "If he prove unthankful to his faithful servants so soon, he cannot long tarry in that soil. Let the speed of his predecessors be his warning."³ Bowes declared, that if Lennox were permitted to triumph, and Morton to fall, the quarrel would be no longer about the trifles of the borders, but the right to the crown; in which Scotland would be assisted by France and Spain, and fortified by a large party within England:⁴ and the wise Burghley, in his "Directions" to Randolph, urged the necessity of immediate action, to save Scotland from the domination of a concealed papist, (so he described Lennox,) who, whatever he might pretend to the contrary, had been permitted by the court of Rome to dissemble his religion.⁵

But this energy was short-lived, and spent itself in words. Hunsdon, after all his threats, protracted his levies; not an English soldier crossed the border; and no decided support or supplies of money could be extracted from the caution and parsimony of the English queen; whilst, on the part of Lennox and his

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Randolph, February 9, 1580-1.

² Ibid. Hunsdon to Randolph, February 3, 1580-1.

³ Ibid. Leicester to Randolph, February 15, 1580-1.

⁴ Ibid. Bowes to Leicester, Berwick, March 14, 1580-1.

⁵ Ibid. Directions sent to Mr Randolph, wholly in Burghley's hand, February 17, 1580-1.

adherents, all was vigour and warlike preparation. The whole force of the realm was summoned to be in readiness to resist the English army. Bands of "waged soldiers" (so termed to distinguish them from the feudal militia of the country, who served without pay) were enlisted, and added to the ordinary guard about the king's person; and the three estates assembled to vote supplies for the exigencies of the expected war with England.

Before this parliament Randolph appeared and made his last great effort to bring about the deliverance of Morton, and overthrow the power of Lennox, by open negotiation and remonstrance. He spoke for two hours: insisted with much earnestness on the benefits to be derived from the friendship of his royal mistress; described, in glowing terms, the dangers to be apprehended from Lennox, whom he denounced as an agent of France and Rome; and produced an intercepted letter from the Bishop of Ross, to prove his allegations. All these exertions, however, came too late, and were utterly unsuccessful. Lennox denied the charge, and demanded the fullest investigation. The parliament promised forty thousand pounds to support the preparations against England; daily rumours of war, and whisperings of the intrigues and conspiracies which were fomented by the English diplomatist, agitated and inflamed the country; and at last, as Randolph himself described it, "Every day bred a new disorder; men began to be stirring in all parts; the ambassador grew odious, his death suspected, and the court in a manner desperate."¹

These suspicions of conspiracies were not without foundation; for, from the moment of his arrival,

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Mr Randolph's Negotiation in Scotland.

Randolph had kept in his eye the third article in his instructions, which was, to raise a faction against Lennox, and employ force, either in seizing his person, or putting him to death in some open attack, if more conciliatory measures failed.¹ It was hoped that in this way the party in the interest of England might secure the person of the young king, and remove from him those obnoxious ministers who persuaded him to throw himself into the arms of France, and to seek the liberty of the imprisoned queen. The great advocates for this plan were Sir Robert Bowes, Lord Hunsdon, Lord Huntingdon, and the Earl of Angus; but they differed somewhat as to the best mode of proceeding. Bowes seemed to have the least scruples as to employing force, for the separating James from his favourite. In a letter to Walsingham or Burghley,² written shortly after Randolph's arrival, he informed his correspondent, that the Scottish nobles were drawing to an association; and that, amid the pageants with which the king and Lennox were then recreating the court, "a strange masque might be, perhaps, seen at Holyrood," which would check the triumph of the favourite. Hunsdon, whose fiery temper on no occasion brooked much delay, recommended martial measures; and assured the English secretary, that Lennox must look for his dismissal to France, or to "something worse."³ Huntingdon, a nobleman of the highest honour in these dark times, assured Randolph, that any attempt to restore English ascendancy by negotiation would be fruitless; that open war must be deprecated; and that to get out of their

¹ MS. Instructions to Mr Randolph, January 6, 1580-1. Also, Memorial for Secret Objects. Caligula, C. vi. 104-106.

² The address is lost. MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. vi. fol. 113. Bowes to —, February 7, 1580-1, Berwick.

³ Harleian, 6999, fol. 203. Hunsdon to Walsingham, Feb. 6, 1580-1.

difficulties by "murder" would be worst of all: but, he added, that he could see no objection to another method, which had been already resorted to with success, and that more than once, in Scottish history. "Why may not some of the nobility, assisted by England, say to the king,—‘your Grace is young; you cannot judge for yourself, and must be rescued from this French stranger, who abuses your confidence;’ and then," he added, "if Lennox resisted and took arms, let them unarm him, if they can, and let our royal mistress assist them."¹

Amidst these various and conflicting opinions, Randolph laboured busily, and with the ardour of a man in his native element; so that at last a band or association was "packed up," to use the common phrase of the times, amongst the nobles; and Bowes informed Leicester of the intentions of the conspirators, in a letter which shows, when taken in connexion with a communication addressed the day after by Walsingham to Lord Hunsdon, that the design of the nobles was to seize the person of the king, and secure, or perhaps murder, Lennox. "Albeit," said Bowes, "the levy of the forces newly assembled in Edinburgh and elsewhere, and the planting them about the king, to guard his person against suspected surprise or violence, doth greatly threaten the stay or defeat of the purposes intended, whereof I know your lordship is advertised; yet I am in good hope, that, if any opportunity be found, the parties associate will, with good courage, attempt the matter." To this, Elizabeth, who knew and directed all, replied, that she would hear of no violence being offered to the king's person; but as for D'Aubigny, she could be content he were surprised,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Huntingdon to Randolph, March 21, 1580-1.

provided it could be executed when he was found separated from his young master.¹ The extent of violence or bloodshed sanctioned under this word, "surprised," cannot be precisely fixed; but to those who knew the character of the Scottish nobles of those days, and none knew it better than the English queen, it conveyed, no doubt, an emphatic meaning.

The conspirators, thus encouraged, completed their arrangements. They succeeded in corrupting some of the royal household; by their connivance, forged keys for the king's private apartments were made; and they thus hoped to enter the palace, seize the young monarch, put Lennox, Argyle, and Montrose, to death, and send James to England.² But Lennox, when on the very point of being cut off, was saved by an unexpected discovery; and Morton, when his prison began to be cheered by the near prospect of escape, found himself more hopelessly situated than before. The chief actors in the association for his rescue were the Earls of Angus and Mar. With Angus, Randolph had arranged all in nightly meetings, held sometimes in the fields, sometimes at Dalkeith. The Laird of Whittingham, a Douglas, and brother to the noted Archibald Douglas, was a principal conspirator, and intrusted with their most secret intentions; and four confidential servants of Morton, named Fleck, or Affleck, Nesbit, Reid, and Jerdan, were principal agents in the plot, and knew all its ramifications. Lord Hunsdon, who had a high admiration of Angus, was, as we have seen, deeply implicated: his forces were in readiness to advance from Berwick into Scot-

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, March 14, 1580-1, Bowes to Leicester. Also, MS. British Museum, Harleian, 6999, fol. 479. Original draft, Walsingham to Hunsdon, March 15, 1580-1.

² MS. Harleian, copy of the time, Randolph to Hunsdon, March 20, 1580-1.

land; and he only waited for the signal which was to be the news of the king's seizure, when Lennox, receiving some hint which awakened his suspicion, seized Douglas of Whittingham, threatened him with the rack, and obtained a revelation of the whole. Morton's servants, Fleck, Nesbit, Reid, and Jerdan, were instantly arrested and put to the torture. Angus was banished beyond the Spey; Randolph, whose intrigues were laid bare, fled precipitately to Berwick, after having been nearly slain by a shot fired into his study;¹ and Elizabeth, disgusted by the treachery of Whittingham, and the utter failure of the plot against Lennox, commanded Hunsdon to dismiss his forces, recalled Randolph, and abandoned Morton to his fate.²

This, it was now evident, could not be long averted. His enemies were powerful and clamorous against him. Captain James Stewart, the accuser of the ex-regent, had openly declared, if they by whom he had been urged to this daring enterprise did not make an end of the old tyrant, he would soon make an end of *them*.³ The confession of Whittingham, and of Morton's confidential servants, had furnished his enemies with evidence sufficient to bring him to the scaffold;⁴ and although Angus, Randolph, and Hunsdon still continued their plots, it was found impossible to carry them into execution. One by one the various earls and barons, whose assistance had been bought by

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, March 25, 1581. Randolph affects to "suspend" his judgment of the truth of all this confession of Whittingham till further trial. There seems to be little doubt that he knew all the particulars of the plot previous to the confession, and bore a principal part in arranging it.

² See Proofs and Illustrations, Nos. XII. and XIII.

³ MS. State-paper Office, January 11, 1580-1, Bowes to Lord Burghley and Sir Fr. Walsingham.

⁴ MS. State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, March 25, 1581.

Elizabeth, dropped off, and made their peace with the stronger party;¹ till at last Morton was left alone, and nothing remained to be done but to sacrifice the victim.

For this purpose Stewart, his accuser, and Montrose, were commissioned to bring him from Dunbarton to the capital. In those dark days many prophetic warnings hung over ancient houses; and among the rest was one which predicted that the bloody heart, the emblem of the house of Douglas, would fall by Arran. This saying Morton affected to despise; for the Earl of Arran was dead, and the Hamiltons, his enemies, in whose family this title was hereditary, were now banished and broken men. But Stewart, his implacable foe, had recently procured from the king the gift of the vacant earldom, though the news of his promotion had never reached the captive in his prison at Dunbarton. When Morton, therefore, read the name of Arran in the commission, he started, exclaiming, "Arran! who is that? the Earl of Arran is dead."—"Not so," said the attendant; "that title is now held by Captain James Stewart."—"And is it so?" said he, the prediction flashing across his memory: "then, indeed, all is over; and I know what I must look for."²

Yet, although hopeless as to the result, nothing could be more calm or undaunted than the temper in which he met it. During his long imprisonment, he had expressed contrition for his sinful courses; deplored the many crimes into which ambition and the insatiable love of power had plunged him; and sought for rest in the consolations of religion, and the con-

¹ MS. Harleian, 6999, fol. 527. Randolph to Hunsdon, Edinburgh, March 23, 1580-1.

² Spottiswood, p. 313.

stant study of the Holy Scriptures. At the same time, his preparations for the worst had not prevented him from taking as active a part against his enemies as his captivity would allow.

He was brought to trial on the 1st of June, five months after his arrest ; and such was still either the lingering dread of his power, or the terror of some attempt at rescue, that the whole town was in arms. Two companies of soldiers were placed at the Cross, two bands above the Tolbooth ; whilst the citizens, armed also, and with another body of troops, filled the principal street, for the purpose of conducting him from his lodging to the Tolbooth, where the trial took place. His indictment contained twelve heads of accusation, or "*dittay*;" but the paper has not been preserved ; and this is the less material, as the proceedings had scarcely begun, when a letter from the king was presented, commanding the jury to confine their attention solely to the most important charge, his accession to the murder of the late king, his father. On this point, absolute and direct proof might not have been easily procured ; for it turned out that Sir James Balfour either did not possess, or would not produce, the bond for Darnley's murder. But Morton's own defence supplied this defect ; for although he denied that he had ever procured, or given his consent to the death of Darnley, he distinctly admitted that he knew the murder was to be committed, and had concealed it ; upon which confession the jury found him guilty.

The terms in which their sentence was embodied were the same as those still employed in Scotland. It declared him "convicted of counsel, concealing, and being art and part of the king's murder;" upon hearing which last words read aloud, the earl, who

had maintained the greatest calmness and temper during the trial, became deeply agitated. "Art and part!" said he, with great vehemence, and striking the table repeatedly with a little baton or staff which he usually carried — "art and part! God knoweth the contrary." It is evident that he drew the distinction between an active contrivance and approval, and a passive knowledge and concealment of the plot for Darnley's assassination.

On the morning of the day on which he suffered, some of the leading ministers of the Kirk, with whom he had been much at variance on the subject of Episcopacy, breakfasted with him in the prison; and a long and interesting conference took place, of which the particulars have been preserved in a narrative drawn up by those who were present.¹ It is difficult for any one who reads this account, and who is acquainted with the dark and horrid crimes which stained the life of Morton, not to be painfully struck with the disproportion between his expressions of contrition, and his certain anticipations of immediate glory and felicity. The compunction for his many crimes — murder, tyranny, avarice, cruelty, lust, and all the sins which were the ministers of his exorbitant ambition and pride — is so slight, that we feel perplexed as to the sincerity of a repentance which seems to sit so easily. He speaks of the murder of Riccio, or, as he terms it, "the slaughter of Davie," in which he acted so prominent a part, without one expression of regret; and appears to have lost almost every recollection of his former life, in his prospect of instant admission into the society of the blessed. Yet all may have been, nay, let us hope all was, sincere; and

¹ Bannatyne's Memorials, Bannatyne Club edition, p. 317.

whilst it is vain to speculate upon a state of mind known only to Him who sees the heart, allowance must be made for the character of an age familiar with blood; for the peculiar, and almost ultra-Calvinistic, theology of the divines who ministered to him in his last moments; and the possibility of inaccuracy in the narrative itself, which was not read over to him before his death. In speaking of the assassination of the king, he distinctly repeated his admissions made at the trial; affirming that he, in common with many others, knew that Darnley was to be cut off, but did not dare to forewarn him; and adding, that the queen was the contriver of the whole plot.

These conferences took place on the day in which he suffered; and his friends amongst the clergy had scarcely left him, when his keeper entered his room, and desired him to come forth to the scaffold. He appeared surprised, and observed, that, having been so much troubled that day with worldly matters, he had hoped that one night at least would have been allowed him to have advised ripely with his God. "But, my lord," said the keeper, "they will not wait, and all things are ready."—"If it be so," answered he, "I praise God I am ready also;" and after a short prayer, he passed down to the gate of the palace to go to the scaffold. Here another interruption took place; for Arran, his mortal enemy, was waiting on the steps, and requested him to tarry till his confession, which had been made to the ministers, had been written down, and brought to him for his signature. But this reimmersion into worldly affairs he entreated to be spared. "Bethink you, my lord," said he, "that I have far other things now to advise upon. I am about to die; I must prepare for my God. Ask me not to write now; all these good men (pointing to the ministers)

can testify what I have spoken in that matter.” With this Arran professed himself satisfied: but his importunity was not at an end; for he added, that Morton must be reconciled to him before he proceeded farther. To this the earl willingly agreed; observing, that now was no time to reckon quarrels, and that he forgave him and all, as he himself hoped for forgiveness. He then proceeded to the scaffold, which he ascended with a firm step; and turning to the people repeated, shortly, his confession of the foreknowledge of the king’s murder, only suppressing the name of his near relative, Mr Archibald Douglas. He declared that he died in the profession of the gospel as it was at that day taught and established in Scotland; and exhorted the people, if they hoped for the favour of Heaven, to hold fast the same. Mr James Lawson, one of the ministers, then prayed aloud; and during this act of devotion, Morton, who had thrown himself, with his face on the ground, before the block on which he was to suffer, was observed to be deeply affected. In his agitation, his whole frame was convulsed with sighs and sobs bursting from his bosom; and his body rebounded from the earth on which he lay along. On rising up, however, his face was calm and cheerful; he shook his friends by the hand, bidding them farewell with many expressions of kindness; and having declined to have his hands bound, knelt down and laid his neck upon the block. At this awful moment, Mr James Lawson, stooping forward to his ear, read some verses from the Scripture, which Morton repeated with a firm voice. As he pronounced the words, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” the axe descended, and the imperfect sentence died upon the lips, which quivered and were silent for ever.¹ The

¹ MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1156.

execution took place about four o'clock on the evening of Friday the 2d of June. It was remarked that Fernyhirst, who was known to have been acquainted with the murder of the king, stood in a window opposite the scaffold. He was recognised by a conspicuous feature in his dress—his large ruffles; and seemed to take delight in the spectacle. The people also remarked that Lord Seton and his two sons had taken great care to secure a good view of all that passed, by pulling down a stair which would have intercepted their view of the scaffold.¹

On the day after Morton suffered, George Binning, a servant of Archibald Douglas, was executed for his participation in the murder of the king. The confession of this accomplice threw some additional light on this dark story. He affirmed, that his master, Archibald Douglas, who was then an adherent of the Earl of Bothwell, was present at the deed, and, in his haste to leave the spot, lost one of his slippers; that, when his master came home, his clothes were full of clay and soil, occasioned, no doubt, by the explosion; and that, in retreating from the scene of the murder, he (Binning) encountered, at the foot of a narrow lane near the spot, certain "musselled men," meaning men who had disguised themselves by muffling their faces in their cloaks; one of whom, as he conjectured by his voice, was a brother of Sir James Balfour.²

The death of Morton was followed, as was to be expected, by the concentration of the whole power of the state in the hands of the Earl of Lennox and

Morton's head was fixed on the Tolbooth, on the highest stone of the gable towards the public street. There is a fine original picture of the Regent Morton at Dalmahoy, near Edinburgh, the seat of the present Earl of Morton. It has been engraved by Lodge.

¹ MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1156.

² Ibid.

Captain Stewart, now Earl of Arran. This necessarily led to the revival of the influence of France, and to renewed intrigues by the friends of the Catholic faith and the supporters of the imprisoned queen. The prospects of the Protestant lords, and of the more zealous ministers of the Kirk, were proportionably overclouded; the faction in the interest of England was thrown into despair, and reports of the most gloomy kind began to circulate through the country. It was said that religion was on the point of being altered; that the king would marry a princess of the house of Lorraine; that the Duke of Guise had already written to him in the most friendly terms, and now for the first time had condescended to call him king.¹ The conduct of Lennox was calculated to confirm rather than mitigate these suspicions. He professed, indeed, an earnest desire to maintain amicable relations with England; and had written to this effect to the Earl of Leicester, warning him against Archibald Douglas, who was now in England, and laboured to embroil the two kingdoms.² But he had forgotten entirely his friendly professions to the Presbyterians. The ministers of the Kirk, who had congratulated themselves as the instruments of his conversion, were treated with coldness; and it was soon discovered that he had warmly espoused the king's opinions with regard to Episcopacy, and was ready to second, to his utmost ability, the efforts of the monarch for its complete establishment in his dominions.

Meanwhile, the new Earl of Arran was not neglectful of his interests, and advanced rapidly in power

¹ MS. State-paper Office, B.C. Scrope to Burghley, August 18, 1581. Also, B.C. same to same, September 31, 1581. Also, MS. State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, October 3, 1581.

² MS. State-paper Office, Lennox to Leicester, Oct. 7, 1581, Lithgow.

and presumption. Soon after the execution of Morton, he appeared before the privy council, entered into a detail of his proceedings against that nobleman, lamented the necessity he had been under of employing torture to procure evidence, and demanded and obtained an act of approval from the king, 'which characterized his whole conduct as honourable, and assured him, that at no future period should it be called in question.'¹ His next step was an act of such open profligacy, as to incense and scandalize the whole country. He lived in habits of familiar friendship with the Earl of March, and had been under deep obligations to him; but he employed the opportunities such intimacy gave him to seduce the affections of the Countess of March, a woman of great beauty; and so completely succeeded in depraving her mind, that she brought an action of divorce against her husband, on a ground which, in this day, none but the most abandoned could plead. The suit was successful, the decree of divorce pronounced, and Arran married the countess, whose situation at that moment proclaimed her either a liar or an adulteress. It affords a shocking picture of the manners of the times, that the young king appears to have countenanced this proceeding. Nor was this all. James determined to grant new honours to those who had assisted him in the overthrow of Morton: Lennox was made a duke;² Captain Stewart, who had already received a gift of the earldom of Arran, was invested in that dignity with great solemnity; the Earl of March received the earldom of Orkney; Lord Ruthven that

¹ Original Record of Privy-council, in the Register-house, Edinburgh, June 3, 1581.

² Douglas, vol. ii. p. 99. Moyse's Memoirs, p. 34, Bannatyne edition. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1156, states he was proclaimed duke on the 27th August, 1581.

of Gowrie ; and Lord Maxwell, one of the most powerful nobles of that time, became Earl of Morton.

Parliament now assembled, and the sanction of this supreme court was given to all those measures lately passed in favour of Lennox and Arran. Indeed, it could scarcely be expected that any would dare to oppose them ; for James had sent intimation to the Earls of Mar, Eglinton, and Glencairn, with the Lords Lindsay, Boyd, Herries, and Ochiltree, that he would dispense with their presence on this occasion ;¹ and none, probably, attended but those who were favourable to the court. The adherents of the late Earl of Morton were pronounced rebels, and their estates confiscated. Amongst these, the principal were the Earl of Angus, Archibald Douglas of Whittingham, James Douglas prior of Pluscardine, and James Douglas of Pittendreich, two natural sons of the Regent Morton ; Douglas of Parkhead, and Archibald Douglas constable of the castle of Edinburgh. In the same parliament, Lennox, who believed his influence now to be all-powerful, exerted himself to procure the pardon of Sir James Balfour, who had recently done him good service in the overthrow of Morton. But he was disappointed ; for James refused his request, and pointed to those acts of parliament by which it was declared, that no person guilty of the king his father's murder, should ever be restored.² At the same meeting of the estates, the statutes were confirmed which protected the reformed religion ; some enactments were introduced for the regulation of the coinage, against the expor-

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, October 18, 1581.

² MS. State-paper Office, B.C. Thomas Selby to Mr Thomas Foster, November 29, 1581.

tation of wool, and other acts directed against that excess in apparel amongst the middle and lower classes, and expensive and superfluous banquets, which marked the progress of the country in wealth and refinement, and had excited the jealousy of the higher nobility.

It is now necessary to turn for a moment to the Scottish queen in her imprisonment. It was a miserable circumstance in the fate of this unfortunate princess, that any successes of her friends generally brought along with them an increase of rigour and jealousy upon the part of her inexorable rival. This increase, on the other hand, as surely led to more determined efforts for her delivery; and thus, during the thirteen years for which she had now continued a captive, her health had been shattered, and her spirits broken, by those alternations of hope and fear,—those fluctuations of ardent expectation, or bitter disappointment, which must have destroyed even the healthiest and most buoyant constitution. Her condition about this time was so feeble, that she had lost the use of her limbs, and was carried in a chair, or litter, by her servants. She besought Elizabeth, in pathetic terms, for the favour of a coach, that she might enjoy a drive in the park of Sheffield castle, where she was confined; she requested the additional attendance of two female servants and two men servants, which her sickness demanded; and she entreated to have passports for the Lady Lethington and Lord Seton, in whose society she might find some alleviation of her solitude. But, although Castelnau, the French ambassador, seconded these requests by the most earnest remonstrance, the English queen was deaf to his entreaties, and resisted the application.¹

¹ Addition aux Mem. de Castelnau, p. 519. Chalmers' Life of Mary, vol. i. pp. 384, 388.

This cold and unrelenting conduct could not fail to make a deep impression upon Mary; and, in a moment of resentment and excitation, she had determined to resign her rights as Queen of Scots, and her claims upon the crown of England, into the hands of her son, with an earnest hope, that he would invade that realm, and, assisted by the Roman Catholic party abroad, and Elizabeth's discontented subjects at home, establish his rights, and overwhelm her oppressor. But the return of calmer consideration showed the madness of such a scheme; and her anxiety for the amicable recognition of the rights of her son to the English crown, banished the suggestions of personal resentment. In a memorial presented by Mary about this time to Elizabeth and her parliament, she requested to be heard, by deputies whom she would appoint, upon the subject of her title and pretensions.¹ It was not, she added, on her own account that she suggested this. Continued affliction had brought on a premature age; sorrow had extinguished ambition; and, with her shattered frame, it would be ridiculous to expect to survive Elizabeth. But she felt the natural anxiety of a mother to secure the rights of her child: and she entreated her sister of England to agree to her petition, and to recognise the undoubted title of her son, as the most certain means of promoting settled peace, and securing their mutual security.

This sensible memorial experienced the same fate as her former petition: it made no impression upon the Queen of England, or her ministers; and Mary, defeated in her moderate desires, was compelled to embrace more determined measures, and to throw

¹ Murdin, p. 367.

herself entirely into the arms of France. This led to a new project, known by the name of "The Association," and which appears to have originated about this time. It was proposed to the young king, that in order to have his title to the Scottish throne recognised by the powers of Europe, none of whom, with the exception of England, had yet publicly given him the name of king, he should resign the crown to his mother, under the condition that she should retransmit it to him, and retire from all the active duties of the government. But before pursuing this scheme, which led ultimately to important consequences, it is necessary to attend to the state of the church, and its violent collision with the crown.

The struggle between Episcopacy, which had been originally established at the time of the Reformation, and the Presbyterian form of church government, was now assuming every day a more determined and obstinate form. The young king, with his ministers, and favourites, Lennox and Arran, and a large proportion of the nobility, supported Episcopacy. The ministers of the Kirk, and the great body of the burghers, and middle and lower classes of the people, were zealously attached to the Presbyterian model; and considered the office of a bishop as anti-scriptural, and a remnant of popery. In a General Assembly, held some time previous to this, the "Platform" of ecclesiastical government, drawn up by Andrew Melvil, had been ratified by a majority of the ministers, and received the solemn sanction of the church, under the title of "The Second Book of Discipline."¹ Under these conflicting circumstances, the Duke of Lennox, whose influence with the young king gave him an

¹ Calderwood's History, pp. 97, 102, convened April 20, 1581. Confessions of Faith, vol. ii. p. 807.

almost absolute power in the disposal of patronage, appointed Mr Robert Montgomery to the vacant bishoprick of Glasgow. It was notorious to all, that this was a collusive and simoniacal transaction; for Montgomery resigned the temporalities of the see to the duke, and was contented to receive a small annual stipend out of its revenues. But the clergy, at first waving this objection, pronounced a high censure upon Montgomery, and interdicted him from accepting a bishoprick. He remonstrated, and was supported by the king and his council, who contended, that as Episcopacy had never been abolished by the three estates, no illegal act had been committed.

The General Assembly of the church soon after was convened in the capital; and as some private intelligence had been sent to Scotland of the intended "Association" between the imprisoned queen and the king her son, this ecclesiastical convention met in a state of much excitement.¹ It was known that various missionary priests were covertly intriguing in the country; that George Douglas had arrived on a mission from France, charged with secret despatches from the Bishops of Glasgow and Ross, her agents in that realm; and great dread was entertained of Lennox's increasing influence over the mind of the young king. Determined measures, therefore, were adopted by the church. Articles against Montgomery were drawn up, which condemned, in strong terms, his life, conversation, and opinions; and although, upon investigation, many faults objected to him turned out to be frivolous and unfounded, other matters were proved, which, it was contended, utterly incapacitated him for the office which he had accepted. He

¹ Calderwood, p. 118.

received an injunction, therefore, to continue in his ministry at Stirling; and, under pain of the highest censures, to abandon all thoughts of the bishoprick.

During these transactions, Elizabeth, who had become alarmed on the subject of Scotland, and dreaded the preponderating influence of Lennox and Arran, despatched Captain Nicolas Arrington, an able officer of the garrison at Berwick, on a mission into that country. He was instructed to use his utmost efforts to persuade the king to continue in amicable relations with England; to sow, if possible, by some secret practice, a division between the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Arran; and to expose the devices of France and Spain for the overthrow of religion, and the resumption of power by the Scottish queen.¹ It had been the advice of Sir Robert Bowes, in a letter addressed to Burghley, that every means should be adopted to increase some jealousies, which, owing to the pride and intolerance of Arran, had arisen between him and the duke. But after every effort to "blow the coals,"² as he expressed it, these proud rivals became convinced that their safest policy was to forget their differences, and unite against their common enemies. A reconciliation, accordingly, took place;³ and Lennox, strong in the continued attachment of the king, and the new friendship of Arran, determined to concentrate his whole strength against that faction of the Kirk which opposed themselves to Episcopacy, and had threatened his bishop with deposition.

At this moment secret information of a threatening nature arrived from France. The reports regarding

¹ State-paper Office, October 26, 1581, Instructions for N. Arrington, sent into Scotland. Copy.

² MS. State-paper Office, Bowes to Burghley, October 18, 1581.

³ Historie of James the Sext, p. 186.

the progress of "The Association" between the queen-mother and her son were confirmed. It was said, that Lord Arbroath, the head of the great house of Hamilton, now in banishment, was to be restored by French influence, under the condition, that the "mass" should return along with him; and Mr John Durie, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, sounded a fearful note of alarm, in a sermon which he delivered in the High Church of the city. The king, he said, had been moved by certain courtiers, who now ruled all at their will, to send a private message to the King of France and the Duke of Guise, and to seek his mother's blessing. He knew this, he declared, from the very man who was employed in the message — George Douglas, Mary's sworn servant; and he painted in strong colours the deplorable effects which might be anticipated from such a coalition. It was proposed, in these dark counsels, that the king should resign the crown to his mother, and she convey it again to him, with an assurance that he should then be acknowledged as king by France, and by the powers of Europe, which, up to this time, had refused him the royal title. And what must inevitably follow from all this? If the transaction were completed, it would be argued, that the establishment of religion, and all other public transactions since the coronation, were null; that the king's friends were traitors, and their adversaries his only true subjects. After the sermon, a remarkable conference took place between the Earls of Argyle and Gowrie, and the ministers, Durie, Lawson, and Davison, in the council-house. On being pressed as to the French intrigues, Argyle confessed that he had gone too far; but affirmed, that if he saw any thing intended against religion, he would forsake his friends, and oppose it to his utmost.

To Gowrie, Davison the minister of Libberton, in alluding to the murder of Riccio, used a still stronger argument: "If things," said he, "go forward as they are intended, your head, my lord, will pay for Davie's slaughter. But Scottish nobles now are utterly unworthy of the place they hold: they would not, in other times, have suffered the king to lie alone at Dalkeith with a stranger, whilst the whole realm is going to confusion; and yet the matter," they significantly added, "might be reformed well enough with quietness, if the noblemen would do their duty."¹

Nor were these warnings and denunciations confined to the nobility. The young king, when sitting in his private chamber in the palace of Stirling, received an admonition quite as solemn as any delivered to his subjects. Mr John Davison, along with Duncanson the royal chaplain, and Mr Peter Young, entered the apartment; and Davison, after pointing out the dreadful state of the country, exhorted him to put away those evil counsellors who were so fast bringing ruin upon the commonweal and his own soul. "My liege," said he, "at this present, there are three jewels in this realm precious to all good men — Religion, the Commonweal, and your Grace's person. Into what a horrible confusion the two first have fallen, all men are witness; but as to the third, your grace hath need to beware, not only of the common hypocrites and flatterers, but more especially of two sorts of men. First, such as opposed themselves to your grace in your minority: whereby they have committed offences for which they must yet answer to the laws; and, therefore, must needs fear the king. Remember the saying, '*Multis terribilis, caveto multos.*' The second

¹ MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1172.

sort are those who are conjured enemies to religion. If," he concluded, "your grace would call to you such godly men as I could name, they would soon show you whom they think to be included in these two ranks." It had been arranged beforehand, that should the young king exhibit any desire to profit by this counsel, Davison was to name the Lairds of Dun, Lundie, and Braid, with Mr Robert Pont and Mr James Lawson, two of the leading ministers; but James, after hearing the exordium, and observing hurriedly that it was good counsel, started off from the subject, and broke up the interview.¹

These scenes of alarm and admonition were followed by a violent attempt of Montgomery to possess himself of the bishoprick, in which he entered the church at Glasgow, accompanied by a band of the royal guard, and in virtue of a charge addressed by the king to that presbytery, endeavoured to expel the established minister from the pulpit, and to occupy his place. This was resisted by the Kirk; and the ministers of the presbytery of Glasgow were in consequence summoned before the council;² but they defended themselves with the greatest courage, and, when pressed by the king, declined the judgment of the sovereign or his judges in a matter not of a civil but of a purely spiritual nature. Lawson, Durie, Andrew Hay, and a large body of the ministers and elders from Edinburgh, Dalkeith, and Linlithgow, accompanied them to Stirling; and when the king insisted that they should receive Montgomery, and warned them of the fatal consequences of a refusal, he was boldly reminded by Durie, that such intemperate proceedings would only lead to the excommunication of the man whom he

¹ MS. Calderwood, British Museum, fol. 1172.

² April 13, 1582.

favoured.¹ This threat, and the preparations for carrying it into immediate execution, alarmed the object of the quarrel himself; and the submission of Montgomery to the jurisdiction and sentence of the Kirk, led to a temporary cessation of the controversy.

This lull, however, proved exceeding brief, and was soon followed by a more determined collision between the antagonist principles of Presbyterianism and Episcopacy. The Kirk at this time possessed, amongst its ministers, some men of distinguished learning, and of the greatest courage: Durie, Lawson, Craig, Lindsay, Andrew Melvil, Thomas Smeton, Pont, Davison, and many others, presided over its councils, and formed a spiritual conclave which, in the infallibility they claimed, and the obedience they demanded, was a hierarchy in every thing but the name. Eloquent, intrepid, and indefatigable, they had gained the affections of the lower classes of the people, and were supported also by the increasing influence of the burghs and the commercial classes. Animated by such feelings, wielding such powers, and backed by such an influence, it was not to be expected that they would be easily put down. The great cause of Episcopacy, on the other hand, was supported by the young king, who was himself no contemptible theologian, by the Duke of Lennox, the Earl of Arran, and a large portion of the old nobility. Abroad, it looked to the sympathy and assistance of France; and as the whole hopes of the imprisoned queen, and the great body of the Roman Catholics in England, rested on Lennox and his friends, they were inclined to strengthen his

¹ Calderwood MS. fol. 1174. Montgomery, incensed against Andrew Hay, one of the ministers, threatened to bring him to justice, as art and part in foreknowing and concealing the late king's murder. The only ground of the charge was, that Mr Andrew Hay was uncle to the Laird of Tallo, (Hay,) who was executed for the murder.

hands in every possible way. The power of this party had recently been shown by the destruction of Morton, which they carried through with a high hand, against the whole influence of England and the Kirk; and, flushed by this success, they resolved to renew the battle with the Presbyterian party, in the case of the Bishop of Glasgow, which, however insulated or insignificant it might appear at first sight, really involved the establishment or destruction of Episcopacy. Montgomery, a weak man, and wholly under the influence of Lennox, was easily persuaded to retract his submission, and repeat his attempts to possess himself of the bishoprick; whilst at this moment the feelings of the ministers were goaded to the highest pitch of jealousy and resentment, by the arrival of a messenger from the Duke of Guise: ostensibly, he came with a present of horses to the king; but it was suspected that more was intended than mere courtesy. The person who brought this gift was Signor Paul, the duke's master stabler, and, as was asserted, one of the most active and remorseless murderers at the massacre of St Bartholomew.¹ It was scarcely to be expected that this should be tamely borne; and John Durie, the minister of Edinburgh, instantly rode to Kinneil, Arran's castle, where the king had determined to receive Guise's envoy. Meeting Signor Paul in the garden, the minister hastily drew his cap over his eyes, declaring he would not pollute them by looking on the devil's ambassador; and turning to the king, rebuked him sharply for receiving gifts from so odious a quarter. "Is it with the Guise," said he, "that your grace will interchange presents; with that

¹ MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1189, "This Seignor Paul was a famous murtherer at the massacre at Paris. No fitter man could be sent to make pastime to the king."

cruel murderer of the saints? Beware, my liege, I implore you," he continued, "beware with whom you ally yourself in marriage; and remember John Knox's last words unto your highness; remember that good man's warning, that so long as you maintained God's holy gospel, and kept your body unpolluted, you would prosper. Listen not, then, to those ambassadors of the devil, who are sent hither to allure you from your religion."¹ To this indignant sally, James, overawed by the vehement tone of the remonstrant, quietly answered, "that his body was pure; and that he would have no woman for his wife who did not fear God and love the Evangell."²

From Kinneil, Durie returned to Edinburgh, where his zeal flamed up to the highest pitch; and, transforming the pulpit, as was the practice of those times, into a political rostrum for the discussion of the measures of the government, he exposed the intrigues of Lennox, the schemes of the queen-mother, and the profligacy of the court, in such cutting and indignant terms, that he was immediately summoned before the council, and ordered to quit the city.³ The strictest injunctions, at the same time, were directed to the provost and magistrates to carry this sentence of banishment into execution under pain of treason.⁴ Lennox's party, at this moment, was described by the Laird of Carmichael, (a Scottish gentleman employed to transmit secret information to Walsingham,) as guiding all at court. Its ranks, as he informed

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1189, and MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Woddrington to Walsingham, Berwick, May 15, 1582. The interview between Durie and the king at Kinneil, took place on the 11th May. MS. Calderwood.

² Ibid. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1189.

³ See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XIV.

⁴ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1189, May 30, 1582.

the English secretary, embraced Arran, a great persecutor of the preachers, Huntley, Seton, Ogilvy, the Prior Maitland, (this was the younger brother of the famous Secretary Lethington,) Balfour, Robert Melvil, Mr David Makgill, and one Mr Henry Keir. These, he added, were all papists.¹ But Carmichael himself, probably a rigid Presbyterian, was little disposed to make any distinction between those who supported Episcopacy, and the friends of the church of Rome. Yet it must be remembered, that the reported intrigues between the court of Spain and the duke, with the secret negotiations of the Jesuits for the association of the queen-mother with her son in the government, gave him no little countenance in the assertion; and the vigour with which Lennox pushed forward his measures against the Kirk, seemed to indicate a very formidable combination of forces. Undismayed, however, by the attack of their adversaries, the party of the Kirk only roused themselves to a more determined opposition, retaliated, by excommunicating Montgomery, and called upon the people to weep for their sins, and be prepared to peril all, rather than part with their religion. The country, at this moment, must have presented an extraordinary picture: the pulpits rang with alternate strains of lamentation and defiance. Patrick Simpson, alluding to the fate of Durie, declared, that the principal link in the golden chain of the ministry was already broken. Davison, a firmer spirit, whose small figure and undaunted courage had procured him from Lennox the *sobriquet* of the "*petit diable*," exhorted his auditors to take courage, for God would dash the devil in his own devices; and, on the 27th of June, an extraordinary

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, June 1, 1582, Laird of Carmichael to Walsingham.

Assembly of the church was convened in the capital, to meet the crisis which, in the language of the times, threatened destruction to their Zion.¹

The proceedings were opened by a remarkable sermon, or lecture, which Andrew Melvil delivered from the pulpit of the New Kirk. He chose for its subject the fourth chapter of the first Epistle to Timothy; and, in speaking of the fearful trials and heresies of the "latter days," inveighed, in no gentle terms, against the audacious proceedings of the court. The weapon now raised against them, he described as the "bloody gully"² of absolute power. And whence," said he, "came this gully? From the pope. And against whom was it used? Against Christ himself: from whose divine head these daring and wicked men would fain pluck the crown, and from whose hands they would wrench the sceptre." These might be deemed strong expressions, he added, but did not every day verify his words, and give new ground for alarm? "Need he point out to them the king's intended demission of the crown to his mother? Was not the palpable object of this scheme, which had been concocting these eight years past, the resumption of her lost power, and with it the re-establishment of her idolatrous worship? Who were its authors? Beaton bishop of Glasgow, and Lesley bishop of Ross. And by what devices did this last-named prelate explain their intentions to the imprisoned princess? To the letters which he sent, he had added a painting of a queen, with a little boy kneeling at her feet and imploring her blessing; whilst she extended one hand to her son, and with the other pointed to his ancestors,

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1189, 1190, 1191, 1192.

² Gully: a large knife; a sword, or weapon.

as if she exhorted him to walk in their footsteps, and follow their faith.”¹

At this Assembly, it was warmly debated whether Durie was bound to obey the sentence of banishment, a point upon which opinions were much divided. The provost and magistrates contended that they must execute the law which had pronounced the sentence, or become themselves amenable to its penalties. One party of the ministers, taking a middle course, advised that two of their brethren, Mr David Ferguson and Mr Thomas Buchanan, should be sent to remonstrate with the king. But from this the fiery Davison loudly dissented. “Ye talk,” said he, “of replacing John Durie. Will ye become suppliants for reinstating him whom the king had no power to displace; albeit his foolish flock have yielded?” At this, Sir James Balfour started to his feet, and fixed his eyes sternly on the speaker. Balfour was notorious as one of the murderers of Darnley; yet having been acquitted of that crime by a packed jury, he had resumed his functions as an elder of the Kirk.² Such a man was not likely to overawe the bold minister; and he undauntedly continued. “Tell me what flesh may or can displace the great King’s ambassador, so long as he keeps within the bounds of his commission?” Saying this, he left the Assembly in great heat, perceiving that the question would be carried against him, which accordingly happened; for, on the resumption of the debate, it was determined that Durie should submit, if the magistrates, who belonged to his flock, insisted. They did so: and that very evening, he was charged not only to depart from the town, but

¹ MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1192, June 27, 1582.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Scrope to Burghley, August 18, 1581.

not to reside within the freedom and bounds of the city.¹ About nine o'clock the same night he was seen taking his way through the principal street of the city, accompanied by two notaries, and a small band of his brethren, among whom were Lawson, Balcanquel, and Davison. On reaching the Market Cross, he directed the notaries to read a written protestation, in which he attested the sincerity of his life and doctrine; and declared, that although he obeyed the sentence of banishment, no mortal power should prevent him from preaching the Word.² Upon this, placing a piece of money in the hands of the notaries, he took instruments, as it was termed; and during the ceremony, Davison, who stood by his side, broke into threats and lamentation. "I too must take instruments," cried he; "and this, I protest, is the most sorrowful sight these eyes ever rested on; a shepherd removed by his own flock, to pleasure flesh and blood, and because he has spoken the truth. But plague, and fearful judgments, will yet light on the inventors." All this, however, passed away quietly, except on the part of the speakers; and the denunciations of the minister appear to have met with little sympathy. A shoemaker's wife in the crowd cried out, if any would cast stones at him, she would help.³ A bystander, also, was heard to whisper to his neighbour, looking with scorn on the two protesters, "If I durst, I would take instruments that ye are both knaves."⁴

Shortly before this, a conference had been held at Stirling, between the commissioners of the court and

¹ MS. Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1195-6.

² Ibid. fol. 1196.

³ Ibid. This same woman had troubled the Kirk much in Morton's time. Her name was Urquhart.

⁴ Calderwood, MS. Hist. fol. 1196.

the Kirk, which had concluded by the king directing the ministers to present him with a list of the grievances of which they complained. They accordingly prepared their "Articles," which, in bold and unequivocal language, drew the distinction between the obedience they owed to the king and the submission that was due to the Kirk. They complained, that the monarch, by advice of evil counsellors, had taken upon him that spiritual authority which belonged to Christ alone, as the King and Head of his Church; and, as examples of this unwarrantable usurpation, appealed to the late banishment of Durie, the maintaining an excommunicated bishop, the interdicting the General Assembly from the exercise of their undoubted spiritual rights, and the evil handling of the brethren of Glasgow for doing their duty in the case of Montgomery.¹

The presentation of these Articles was intrusted to a committee of the ministers. It embraced Pont, Lawson, Smeton, Lindsay, Hay, Polwart, Blackburn, Galloway, Christison, Ferguson, James Melvil, Buchanan, Brand, Gillespie, Duncanson the minister of the king's household, and Andrew Melvil principal of the new College at St Andrews. To these a single layman was added in the person of Erskine of Dun, a name much venerated in the history of the Kirk. It had been agreed, that these "Griefs" should be presented to the king in the beginning of July; and on the 6th of that month, this intrepid band of ministers set out for Perth, where James then held his court. Their adversaries had in vain made many exertions to intimidate them; and secret information had been sent by Sir James Melvil, to his relative Andrew

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Advertisements from Scotland, 22d June, 1582. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1198-9.

Melvil, that his life was in danger; but he only thanked God that he was not feeble in the cause of Christ, and proceeded forward with his brethren. On being ushered into the presence-chamber, they found Lennox and Arran with the king; and laid their remonstrance on the table. Arran took it up, glanced his eye over it, and furiously demanded, "Who dares sign these treasonable Articles?" — "We dare," responded Andrew Melvil, "and will render our lives in the cause." As he said this, he came forward to the council-table, took the pen, subscribed his name, and was followed by all his brethren. The two nobles were intimidated by this unlooked-for courage: the king was silent; and, after some conference, the ministers were dismissed in peace.¹

It would have been well for Lennox and Arran had they taken warning from these symptoms of determined opposition; but they underrated the influence of the ministers, and were not aware that, at this moment, a strong party of the nobility was forming against them. It was fostered by the Kirk, and encouraged by England; whilst its leaders, as usual in such enterprises, appear, about this time, to have drawn up a written contract, which declared the purposes for which they had leagued together. This paper was entitled the "Form of the Band, made among the noblemen that is enterprised against Dobany;"² and it described, in strong language, the causes which had led to the association. These were said to be, the dangers incurred by the professors of God's true religion; the intended overthrow of the gospel, by godless men, who had crept into credit

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1200, 1201.

² Caligula, C. vii. fol. 14, British Museum. A copy. Dobany is D'Aubigny, the Duke of Lennox.

with the king's majesty; the perversion of the laws; the wreck of the ancient nobility and the ministers of religion; the interruption of the amity with England; and the imminent peril of the king's person, unless some remedy were speedily adopted. "Wherefore," it continued, "we have sworn, in God's presence, and engaged, by this 'band,' to punish and remove the authors of these intended evils, and to re-establish justice and good order, as we shall answer to the Eternal God, and upon our honour, faith, and truth."¹ The original of this important paper has not been preserved, and the names of the associators do not appear in the copy; but we may pronounce them, from the evidence of other letters, to have been the Earls of Gowrie, Mar, Glencairn, Argyle, Montrose, Eglinton, and Rothes, with the Lords Lindsay, Boyd, and many others.² The principal enemies to Lennox among the ministers, were Lawson, Lindsay, Hay, Smeton, Polwart, and Andrew Melvil.³

At the time this band was formed, its authors had not fixed upon any precise mode of attack; but the events which now occurred brought their measures to a head, and compelled them to act upon the offensive.

Shortly previous to the interview of the ministers with the king at Perth, Montgomery had been reinstated in the bishoprick of Glasgow by the royal command; and the sentence of excommunication pronounced upon him by the Kirk was reversed, and declared null. To soften, at the same time, the effect of this strong measure of defiance, the king, by a public proclamation, renounced all intention of making any

¹ Caligula, C. vii. fol. 14, British Museum. A copy. See also, MS. Calderwood, p. 1210.

² Ibid. fol. 18, MS. letter, Woddrington to Walsingham, 19th July, 1582, Berwick.

³ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1201.

changes in religion; and Montgomery, confiding in his restored honours, ventured from his seclusion at Dalkeith, where he had resided with his patron Lennox, and once more showed himself in Edinburgh. But Lawson, one of the leading ministers, flew to the magistrates, accused them of permitting an excommunicated traitor to walk the streets, and compelled them to discharge him from their city.¹ As he departed, Montgomery threatened, that within half an hour they should change their tone; and within a brief space returned with a royal proclamation, which was read at the Cross, commanding all men to accept him as a true Christian and good subject. He brought also letters to the same purport, which were sent to the lords of session. All, however, was in vain, so strong was the popular current against him. The provost, in an agony of doubt between his duty to the king and his allegiance to the Kirk, imprecated vengeance upon his head, and declared he would have given a thousand merks he had never seen his face. The judges refused to hear him: and a report arising, that he should be again expelled, an immense crowd assembled. Tradesmen, armed with bludgeons, and women with stones, waited round the door of the court; and their expected victim would probably have been torn in pieces, had he not been smuggled away by the magistrates through a narrow lane called the Kirk Heugh, which led to the Potterrow gate. His retreat, however, became known; the people broke in upon him with many abusive terms. False traitor! thief! man-sworn carle! were bandied from mouth to mouth; and as he sprung through the wicket, he received some smart blows upon the back. So little sympathy did

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1198, 1201. July 2, 1582, and July 24.

he meet with from the king, that, when the story reached the court at Perth, James threw himself down upon the Inch, and, calling him a seditious loon, fell into convulsions of laughter.¹

The effect, however, was different upon Lennox. His penetration did not enable him to see the formidable strength which was gradually arraying itself against him; and his blind obstinacy only hurried on the catastrophe. At the instigation of France,² he determined, by a sudden attack, to overwhelm his enemies; and, assisted by the force which himself and Arran could command, to seize the Earls of Gowrie, Mar, and Glencairn, with Lindsay, and the chief of the Protestant nobles. Having achieved this, and banished the leading ministers of the Kirk, he looked forward to a triumphant conclusion of his labours in the establishment of Episcopacy, and the association of the imprisoned queen with the government of her son. Bowes, however, the English ambassador, became acquainted with these intentions, and informed the Protestant lords of the plot for their destruction. The minuteness of the information which this veteran diplomatist elicited by his pensioned informers, is remarkable.³ He assured Gowrie and his friends, that they must look to themselves, or be content soon to change a prison for a scaffold; that he had certain intelligence the king had consented to arraign them of a conspiracy against his person: and they knew that, if convicted of treason, their fate was sealed. It was by Walsingham's orders that Bowes made this communication, in the hope that it would rouse

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1202.

² Sir R. Bowes to Secretary Walsingham, August 15, 1582, original draft. From the original Letter-book of Sir Robert Bowes, kindly communicated to me by my friend Sir Cuthbert Sharp.

³ See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XV.

the enemies of Lennox to immediate exertion; nor was he disappointed.¹ Appalled by the news, and aware that even a brief delay might sweep them over the precipice on which they stood, they felt the necessity of acting upon the moment. The only danger to be dreaded was in prematurely exploding the mine already in preparation, and thus risking a failure. The band or contract, as we have seen, had been drawn up; but it was still unsigned by many of the nobility. There was scarcely time to concentrate all their forces; and although they made sure of the approval of the ministers of the Kirk, who had already cordially co-operated with them in all their efforts against Lennox, still these ecclesiastical associates were now scattered in different parts of the country, and could not be individually consulted. On the other hand, the danger was imminent; and if they acted instantly, some circumstances promised success. The young king was at Perth, separated both from Lennox and Arran.² He had resorted to that country to enjoy his favourite pastime of the chase; his court was few in number; Gowrie, Glamis, and Lindsay, three of the chief conspirators, were all-powerful in the neighbourhood of Perth; and should they delay, as had been intended, till the king removed to the capital, it would become more difficult, if not impossible, to execute their design. In this state of uncertainty, they received intelligence which made them more than suspect that Lennox had discovered

¹ Original draft, Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, 25th August, 1582, Bowes' Letter-book. See also, Woddrington to Walsingham, July 19, 1582, Caligula, C. vii.

² Wednesday, August 22. Lennox was then at Dalkeith, Arran at Kinneil,—the first place six miles, the second eighteen miles from Edinburgh.

their conspiracy.¹ This settled the question: and having once decided on action, their proceedings were as bold as they had before been dilatory. In an incredibly short time, Gowrie, Mar, Lindsay, the Master of Glamis, and their associates, assembled a thousand men, and surrounded Ruthven castle, where the king then lay. It was Gowrie's own seat; and James, who, it appears, had no suspicion of the toils laid for him, had accepted the invitation of its master, thinking only of his rural sports. To his astonishment, the Earls of Mar and Gowrie entered his presence, removed his guards, presented a list of their grievances, and, whilst they professed the utmost fidelity to his person, took special care that all possibility of escape was cut off. Meanwhile, the intelligence flew to Arran that the king was captive; and he, and Colonel Stewart his brother, set off in fiery speed at the head of a party of horse. Their attempt at rescue was, however, too late; for Colonel Stewart was attacked and defeated by Mar and Lochleven, who threw themselves upon him from an ambush, where they had watched his approach; whilst Arran, who had galloped by a nearer way to Ruthven, was seized the moment he entered the castle court, and confined under a guard. All this had passed with such rapidity, and the lords who surrounded the king treated him with so much respect, that James deluded himself with the hope that he might still be a free monarch. But next morning dispelled the illusion. As he prepared to take horse, the Master of Glamis intimated to him that the lords who were now with him deemed it safer for his grace to remain at Ruthven. James declared he would go that instant, and was about to leave the chamber, when

¹ MS. letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, August 26, 1572, Bowes' Letter-book. Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 277, 281.

this baron rudely interposed, and placing his leg before the king, so as to intercept the doorway, commanded him to remain. The indignity drew tears from the young monarch, and some of the associated lords remonstrated with Glamis; but he sternly answered, "Better bairns¹ greet, than bearded men;" a speech which his royal master never afterwards forgot or forgave.²

But although thus far successful, the actors in this violent and treasonable enterprise were in a dangerous predicament. Gowrie, Mar, Glamis, and Lindsay, were indeed all assured of each other, and convinced that they must stand or fall together; but the band or covenant which, according to the practice of the times, should have secured the assistance of their associates, was still unsigned by a great majority of the most powerful nobles and barons, on whose assistance they had calculated. On the other hand, the Duke of Lennox could reckon on the support of the Earls of Huntley, Sutherland, Morton, Orkney, Crawford, and Bothwell; besides Lords Herries, Seton, Hume, Sir Thomas Kerr of Fernyhurst, Sir James Balfour, the Abbot of Newbottle, and many inferior barons; whilst the Earls of Caithness, March, and Marshal, professed neutrality.³ This array of opposition was sufficiently appalling; and for a brief season the enterprisers of the "raid"⁴ of Ruthven (as it was called) began to waver and tremble;⁵ but a moment's consideration convinced them, that if there was danger in advance, there was

¹ Bairns, children; greet, weep.

² MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4737, fol. 682, 683. Spottiswood, p. 320.

³ State-paper Office, Names of the noblemen and lords that as yet stand with the duke, September 5, 1582.

⁴ Raid, a Scottish word; meaning a forcible inroad, or invasion.

⁵ MS. Caligula, C. vii. fol. 23, Sir George Carey to Burghley, September 5, 1582.

infinitely greater in delay. They were already guilty of treason; they had laid violent hands on the king's person; had defied Lennox, imprisoned Arran, outraged the laws, and raised against them the feelings, not only of their opponents, but of all good citizens. If they drew back, ruin was inevitable. If they went forward, although the peril was great, the struggle might yet end triumphantly. They had the young king in their hands, and could work upon his timidity and inexperience, by menacing his life; they had possession of Arran, also, a man whom they dreaded far more than the gentler and vacillating Lennox; they were certain of the active support of the ministers of the Kirk; and Bowes and Walsingham had already assured them of the warm approval, and, if necessary, the assistance of England. All this was encouraging; and they determined, at every risk, to press on resolutely in the revolution which they had begun.

In the meantime, whilst such scenes passed at Ruthven, the capital presented a stirring scene. Lennox, who was at his castle of Dalkeith, in the immediate neighbourhood of the city, when he received the intelligence of the surprise of the king, deeming himself insecure in the open country, took refuge with his household within the town. On his arrival, the magistrates despatched messengers to Ruthven, to ascertain the truth or falsehood of the king's captivity from his own lips; the ministers of the Kirk began to exult, and rouse the people to join with the Ruthven lords; and Mr James Lawson, although earnestly entreated, by the provost of the city, to be temperate in his sermon, replying, in the words of Micah, that what the Lord put in his mouth he would speak,¹ seized the opportunity to deliver from

¹ Calderwood, MS. History, fol. 1205-6.

the pulpit a bitter and emphatic attack upon the duke and his profligate associate Arran. It was true, he said, that these two barons had subscribed the Confession of Faith, professed the true religion, and communicated with their brethren at the Lord's table; but their deeds testified that they were utter enemies of the truth. Had they not violated discipline, despised the solemn sentence of excommunication, set up *tulchan* bishops, and traduced the most godly of the nobility and of the ministry? And as for this Duke of Lennox, what had been his practices since the day he came amongst them? With what taxes had he burdened the commonwealth, to sustain his intolerable pride? What vanity in apparel; what looseness in manners; what superfluity in banquetting; what fruits and follies of French growth had he not imported into their simple country? Well might they be thankful; well praise God for their delivery from what was to have been executed the next Tuesday. Well did it become Edinburgh to take up the song of the Psalmist—“*Laqueus contritus est, et nos liberati sumus.*”¹

Whilst the ministers of the Kirk thus eulogized the enterprise of the Ruthven lords, Elizabeth, who had speedily received intelligence of their success, despatched Sir George Carey to Scotland, with letters to the young king, and instructions to co-operate with her ambassador Bowes, in strengthening the hands of Gowrie and his faction. Randolph, too, wrote in great exultation to Walsingham, rejoicing in the success of the revolution; and, with the avidity and instinct of the bird which comes out in the storm, requesting to be again employed in the troubled atmosphere of Scotland. Unmoved by the violence of

¹ Calderwood, MS. fol. 1206, Ayscough, 4736, British Museum.

the measures which had been adopted, he, in the spirit of the Puritan party to which he belonged, pronounced the king's captivity a reward conferred by God on his sincere followers. "If it be true," said he, "that the king be now in the Protestants' hands, the duke pursued, Arran imprisoned, and his brother slain, we may then see from this what it is to be true followers of Christ, in earnest preaching, and persevering in setting forth His word without respect or worldly policies."¹ It seems strange it should never have occurred to this zealous diplomatist, that the imprisonment of a king, and the violent invasion and slaughter of his councillors, were not the fruits to be expected from the gospel of peace and love.

Meanwhile, the captive monarch considered the late proceedings in a very different light, and meditated many schemes of escape and revenge; but he was alone and closely watched: he did not even consider his life in safety; and although it would be difficult to believe that Gowrie and his associates had any such atrocious designs, yet the history of Scotland afforded him too good a ground for these apprehensions. Lennox, on the other hand, was timid and irresolute, allowed the precious moments for action to pass, and contented himself with despatching Lord Herries, and the Abbot of Newbottle, with some offers of reconciliation, which were instantly rejected.²

These envoys, on arriving at Stirling, where Gowrie and his fellow conspirators now held the king a prisoner, were not permitted to see James in private, but were introduced to him in the council chamber, where they declared their message. "The Duke of Lennox," they said, "had sent them to inquire into

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, September 2, 1582, Maidstone.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office.

the truth of a rumour, that his sovereign lord was forcibly detained in the hands of his enemies; for if it were so, it was his duty to set him free; and with the assistance of his good subjects, he would instantly make the attempt." The scene which occurred, on the delivery of this message, must have been an extraordinary one. Without giving Gowrie or his friends a moment to reply, James started from his seat, crying out it was all true; he was a captive; he was not at liberty to go where he chose, or to move a step without a guard: and he bade them tell it openly, that all who loved him should assist the duke, and achieve his deliverance. The Ruthven lords were, for a moment, overwhelmed with confusion: but they outbraved the accusation. Their sovereign, they declared, had no more faithful subjects than themselves; nor should he be denied to go where he pleased; only, they would not permit the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Arran to mislead him any longer. If he valued, therefore, the life of that person, he would do well to cause him to retire instantly, and quietly, to France. If this were not done, they must call him to account for his late actions, and enforce against him the most rigorous penalty of the law.¹ Such was the message which they sent back by Lord Herries; and they followed it up by a peremptory command to Lennox to deliver up Dunbarton castle, quit the kingdom within twelve days, and, meanwhile, confine himself with a small train to his houses of Aberdour or Dalkeith; orders which, after a short consideration, he despondingly and pusillanimously prepared to obey.²

¹ Spottiswood, pp. 320-321.

² Copy of the time, endorsed, 14th September from Stirling, 20th September to Windsor; also, MS. letter, Bowes to Walsingham, Stirling, 20th September, 1582, Bowes' Letter-book.

CHAP. VI.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1582—1584.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>England.</i> Elizabeth.	<i>France.</i> Henry III.	<i>Germany.</i> Rudolph II.	<i>Spain.</i> Phillip II.	<i>Portugal.</i> Phillip II.	<i>Pope.</i> Gregory XIII.
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ALL was now joy and exultation with the Ruthven lords, and the ministers of the Kirk, who cordially embraced their cause. Mr John Durie, who had been banished from his pulpit, in the capital, was brought back in processional triumph. As he entered the town, a crowd of nearly two thousand people walked before him bareheaded, and singing the 124th Psalm; and, amid the shouts of the citizens, conducted him to the High Church.¹ It was observed that Lennox, from a window, looked down on the crowd, and tore his beard for anger; but although still supported by a considerable party amongst the citizens, he showed no disposition to contest the field with his enemies; and next day, accompanied by Lord Maxwell, Fernyhirst, and others of his friends, he left the city, and took the road to Dalkeith. This, however, was only to blind his opponents; for he soon wheeled off in an

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1212. They sung it in four parts.

opposite direction, and, with eighty horse, galloped to Dunbarton.¹

Meanwhile, Gowrie and his associates carried all with a bold hand. They had already compelled the king to issue a proclamation, in which he declared that he was a free monarch, and preferred to remain for the present at Stirling: both assertions being well known to be false. They now committed Arran to a stricter ward, summoned a convention of the nobility for an early day, required the Kirk to send commissioners to this Assembly, promised to hear and remove its complaints, and gave a cordial welcome to Sir George Carey and Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassadors, who had now arrived at Stirling.²

At this audience Carey delivered a gracious message from his royal mistress; but when he alluded to the dangerous practices of Lennox, and charged him with meditating an alteration in religion, and the overthrow of the king's estate and person, James could not conceal his passion and disgust. He warmly vindicated his favourite: affirmed that nothing had been done by Lennox alone, but with advice of the council; and declared his utter disbelief that any treason could be proved against him.³ Elizabeth and Walsingham, however, trusted that this would not be so difficult; for they had lately seized and examined two persons, who managed the secret correspondence which the imprisoned Queen of Scots had recently carried on with

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Randolph, 12th September, 1582. Calderwood, MS. Hist. fol. 1213.

² Calderwood, MS. Hist. Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1211-12. Ibid. fol. 1213. Carey had audience on the 12th September. MS. letter, State-paper Office, 14th September, 1582, Carey to Elizabeth. Endorsed by himself, "Copy of my Letter to the Queen's Majesty." Bowes was at Berwick on the 10th, and at Stirling on the 14th September. Bowes' Letter-book.

³ Calderwood, MS. History, fol. 1213.

Lennox, her son, and the court of France. These were, George Douglas of Lochleven, the same who had assisted the queen in her escape, and the noted Archibald Douglas, cousin to the late Regent Morton, who had remained in exile in England since the execution of his relative and the triumph of Lennox.

This Archibald, a daring and unprincipled man, had been a principal agent in the murder of Darnley, and had played, since that time, a double game in England. He had become reconciled to Lennox, and was trusted, in their confidential measures, by Mary and the French court; whilst he had ingratiated himself with Elizabeth, Walsingham, and Randolph, to whom he unscrupulously betrayed the intrigues of their opponents. On the late fall of Arran, the mortal enemy of the house of Douglas, he had written an exulting letter to Randolph,¹ and had begun his preparations for his return to his native country, when he was seized, by the orders of the English queen, his house and papers ransacked, and his person committed to the custody of Henry Killigrew, who by no means relished the charge of the "old Fox," as he styled him in his letter to Walsingham.²

From the revelations of these two persons much was expected; and George Douglas confessed that he had carried on a correspondence between Mary and her son, in which she had consented to "demit" the crown in his favour, on the condition of being associated with him in the government: he affirmed, too, that her friends in France had consented to recognise him as king. It was evident, also, that a constant communi-

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Randolph, September 12, 1582. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XVI.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Henry Killigrew to Walsingham, September 17, 1582.

cation had been kept up between Lennox and the captive queen, in which the Bishop of Glasgow, her ambassador at the French court, had assisted; but it would have required much ingenuity to construe this into treason on the part of Lennox, and the examinations of Archibald Douglas gave no colour to the accusation. Arran, indeed, who was still a prisoner at Ruthven, offered to purchase his freedom by discovering enough to cost Lennox his head;¹ but the lords would not trust him, and preferred relying on their own exertions to accepting so dangerous an alliance.

In these efforts they derived the most active assistance from the ministers of the Kirk, who, on first hearing of the enterprise at Ruthven, despatched Mr James Lawson, and Mr John Davison, to have a preliminary conference with Gowrie and his associates at Stirling;² and, a few days after, sent a more solemn deputation, including Andrew Melvil and Thomas Smeton, to explain to the privy council the griefs and abuses of which the Kirk demanded redress.³ At this meeting, the causes which had led to the late revolution were fully debated; and a band or covenant was drawn up, declaring the purposes for which it had been undertaken, and calling upon all who loved their country and the true religion to subscribe it, and unite in their defence. Two days after this, Lennox, from his retreat at Dunbarton, published an indignant denial of the accusations brought against him; in which he demanded a fair trial before the three estates, and declared his readiness to suffer any punishment, if found guilty.⁴ He alluded in this to the

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Randolph, September 12, 1582.

² On the 15th September, 1582. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1227.

³ Ibid.

⁴ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1225.

king's captivity, and retorted against the Ruthven lords the charge of treason; but the associates fulminated a counter declaration, repelled this as an unfounded calumny, and insisted, that to say the king was detained against his will, was a manifest lie, the contrary being known to all men.¹ What shall we say or think of the Kirk, when we find its ministers lending their countenance and assent to an assertion which they must have known to be utterly false?

In the midst of these commotions which followed the raid of Ruthven, occurred the death of Buchanan, a man justly entitled to the epithet great, if the true criteria of such a character are originality of genius, and the impression left by it upon his age. His intellect, naturally fearless and inquisitive, caught an early and eager hold of the principles of the Reformation; and having gone abroad, and fallen into the toils of the inquisition, persecution completed what nature had begun. In politics he was a republican; and his famous treatise, "*De Jure Regni apud Scotos*," was the first work which boldly and eloquently advocated those principles of popular liberty, then almost new, and now so familiar to Europe. In religion he was at first a leveller, and with the keen and vindictive temper which distinguished him, exerted every effort to overthrow the Roman Catholic church; but in his later years, when the struggle took place between Episcopacy and Presbyterianism, his sentiments became more moderate or indifferent; and latterly he took no part in those busy intrigues of the Kirk and its supporters which terminated in the raid of Ruthven. Of his poetical works, so varied in style and so excellent in execution, it is difficult to speak

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1225.

too highly; for seldom did a finer and more impassioned vein of poetry flow through a Latinity that, without servile imitation, approached so near to the Augustan age. In his history of his native country he is great, but unequal: his was not the age of severe and critical investigation; the school in which he studied was that of Livy and the historians of ancient Rome, in which individuality and truth is often lost in the breadth and generality of its pictures. But in their excellencies he has equalled and sometimes surpassed them. The calm flow of his narrative, his lucid arrangement, the strong sense, originality, and depth of his reflections, and the ease and vigour of his unshackled style, need not dread a comparison with the best authors of the ancient world. The point where he fails is that in which they, too, are weakest—the cardinal virtue of truth. It is melancholy to find so much fable embalmed and made attractive in his earlier annals; and when he descends later, and writes as a contemporary, it is easy to detect that party spirit and unhappy obliquity of vision, which distorts or will not see the truth. In an interesting letter quoted by the best of his biographers,¹ and written not long before his death, he tells his friend, that having reached his seventy-fifth year, and struck upon that rock beyond which nothing remains for man but labour and sorrow, it was his only care to remove out of the world with as little noise as possible. With this view he abstracted himself from all public business; left the court at Stirling, and retired to Edinburgh, where, on the 28th September, 1582, his wishes were almost too literally fulfilled: for amid the tumult and agitation which succeeded the raid of

¹ Irving's *Life of Buchanan*, p. 273.

Ruthven, his death took place in his seventy-sixth year, unnoticed, unrecorded, and accompanied by such destitution, that he left not enough to defray his funeral. He was buried at the public expense in the cemetery of the Grey Friars: but his country gave him no monument; and at this day the spot is unknown where rest the ashes of one of the greatest of her sons.¹

Soon after the death of Buchanan, the General Assembly met at Edinburgh on the 9th of October; and the noblemen who had engaged in the enterprise at Ruthven, having laid before this great ecclesiastical council their "Declaration" of the grounds on which they acted, received, to their satisfaction, the cordial approval of the Kirk. Nor was this all: the Assembly issued their orders, that every minister throughout the kingdom should justify the action, and explain to his congregation the imminent perils from which it had delivered religion, the commonwealth, and the king's person; and not satisfied even with this, it was determined to institute a rigid prosecution of all persons who presumed to express a different opinion.² But although thus resolute in the support of the Ruthven confederates, as far as concerned their seizure of the king, the ministers severely rebuked the same noblemen for the profligacy of their lives, and their sacrilegious appropriation of the ecclesiastical revenues. Davison the minister of Libberton, in his conference with Gowrie and his friends, called loudly on them to begin their reformation of the commonwealth with a thorough reform of their sinful and

¹ Irving's *Life of Buchanan*, p. 309. There appears to have been placed over his grave a common flat stone or head stone, with some inscription; but this, from neglect, was in process of years covered up by weeds and soil, and the spot where it once was is not now known.

² MS. Calderwood, fol. 1232, 3, 4; also, fol. 1236.

abominable conversation, polluted as it was by swearing, lust, and oppression; and to show the sincerity of their repentance by resigning the "*teinds*" into the hands of their true owners;¹ whilst Craig, in preaching before the court, drew tears from the eyes of the young monarch by the severity of his rebuke.²

About this time, Sir Robert Bowes, the English ambassador at Edinburgh, having learnt that the celebrated casket, which contained the disputed letters of Mary to Bothwell, had come, in the late troubles, into the possession of the Earl of Gowrie, communicated the intelligence to Elizabeth. By her anxious and repeated orders he exerted himself to obtain it; but without success. Gowrie at first equivocated, and was unwilling to admit the fact; but when Bowes convinced him that he had certain proof of it, he changed his ground, alleging that such precious papers could not be delivered to Elizabeth without the special directions of the king. This was absurd, for James at this moment was a mere cipher; but the leader in the late revolution did not choose to part with papers which, in his busy and intriguing career, he might one day turn to his advantage.³ Gowrie's is the last hand into which we can trace these famous letters, which have since totally disappeared.

The situation of James was now pitiable and degrading. He hated the faction who had possession of his person: but terror for his life compelled him to dissemble; and he was convinced, that to gain delay and throw his enemies off their guard by appearing reconciled to the dismissal of Lennox, was the surest

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1227.

² Ibid. fol. 1228.

³ The letters of Bowes upon this subject are preserved in his original Letter-book, now before me, and kindly communicated by Sir Cuthbert Sharp. Very full extracts from them were printed by Robertson, in his last edition, from copies sent him by Birch.

step to a recovery of his liberty. The most anxious wish of his heart was to see the duke restored to his former power; but to betray this now would, he thought, be to bring his favourite into more imminent peril; whilst, if he allowed him to retire for a short season to France, he might not only escape ruin, but return with renewed influence and power. There were some friends of Lennox, on the other hand, who exhorted him strongly to attack his enemies, and assured him that every day spent in inactivity, added strength to their position and weakened his own; whereas, if he boldly faced the danger, they were ready to assemble a force sufficient to overwhelm Gowrie, and rescue the king. These so far prevailed that, on one of the dark nights of December,¹ it was resolved to attack the palace of Holyrood, massacre the Ruthven lords, and carry off the king; but the ministers, and Sir George Bowes the English ambassador, sounded the alarm: a strong watch was kept; and although Fernyhirst, Maxwell, Sir John Seton, and other barons, were known to have joined Lennox, and parties of horsemen were seen hovering all night round the city, the enterprise, from some unknown cause, was abandoned, and the king remained a prisoner.²

This failure was a triumph to the opposite faction, who lost no time in following up the advantage. A letter was sent to the duke, to which the king had been compelled to put his name, charging him with disturbing the government, and with recklessly

¹ On the 4th December, 1582.

² MS. Calderwood, fol. 1244, 1245. Also, MS. letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, December 6, 1582, which gives an interesting account of the intended attempt. It was proposed to slay the Earl of Mar, the Abbot of Dunfermline, the Prior of Blantyre, and Mr John Colvile. Bowes' Letter-book.

endangering the safety of the royal person ; whilst a herald was despatched to command him, in the name of the council, instantly to leave the country upon pain of treason.¹ This order, after many vain pretexts and fruitless delays, he at last obeyed ; having first sent a passionate remonstrance to his royal master, against the cruelty and injustice with which he had been treated.² On his road to London, (for he had obtained permission to pass through England into France,) he encountered two ambassadors who were posting to the Scottish court : La Motte, who carried a message from the King of France ; and Davison, who was commissioned by Elizabeth to examine the state of parties in Scotland, and co-operate with Bowes in strengthening the Ruthven faction. It was the anxious desire of the English queen that no communication should take place between La Motte and the duke, as she had received secret information that this Frenchman came to promote the great scheme of an "association" between Mary and her son, by which the Scottish queen was nominally to be joined with him in the government, whilst he was to retain the title of king.³ It was believed, also, that he was empowered to propose a marriage between the young king and a daughter of France, and to strengthen the Catholic party by promises of speedy support. Walsingham, therefore, threw every delay in the way of the French ambassador ; and he acted so successfully, that La Motte found all his

¹ MS. letter, Sir George Bowes to Walsingham, December 9, 1582. Bowes' Letter-book.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, endorsed by Cecil, "From the Duke of Lennox to the Scottish king : from Dunbarton, December 16," 1582. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XVII.

³ MS. State-paper Office, January 20, 1582-3, "Article presentee par la Motte."

purposes counteracted. He was eager to hurry into Scotland before Lennox had left it; but matters were so managed, that they only met on the road; and here, too, Davison, who had received his lesson, took care that their conference should be of the briefest description.¹ Lennox then passed on to London, and the French and English ambassadors held their way for Scotland.

Meanwhile, the Ruthven lords, with their allies the ministers of the Kirk, were much elated by the triumph over Lennox; and Bowes, in a letter to Walsingham, assured the secretary, that Elizabeth might have them all at her devotion if she would but advance the money necessary for their contentment and the support of the king.² They selected Mr John Colville, who had acted a principal part in the late revolution, to proceed as ambassador to the English queen. He came nominally from the King of Scots, but really from them, and brought letters to Walsingham from Gowrie, Mar, the Prior of Blantyre, and the Abbot of Dunfermline, the great leaders of that party. On his arrival at court, he found there his old antagonist the Duke of Lennox, who had brought a letter and a message to Elizabeth from his royal master. This princess had, at first, refused to see him under any circumstances; but afterwards admitted him to a private interview, in which, to use the homely but expressive phrase of Calderwood, the historian of the Kirk, "she rattled him up,"³ addressing to him, at first, many cutting speeches on his misgovernment;

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Burghley, January 3, 1582. Ibid. Sir W. Mildmay to Walsingham, December 29, 1582. Ibid. Burghley or Walsingham to Mr Bowes, January 4, 1582-3.

² Ibid. Bowes to Walsingham, about the 18th December, 1582.

³ The interview took place on Monday, January 14, 1582-3. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1250.

to which the duke replied with so much gentleness and good sense, that she softened down before they parted, and dismissed him courteously.¹

During Lennox's brief residence in London, Secretary Walsingham exerted the utmost efforts to discover his real sentiments on religion; as the ministers of the Kirk insisted that, notwithstanding his professed conversion, he continued a Roman Catholic at heart; and that the whole principles of his government had been, and would continue to be, hostile to England. It is curious to observe by what low devices, and with what complete success, the English secretary became possessed of Lennox's most secret feelings and opinions. There was at the English court one Mr William Fowler, a gentleman of Scottish extraction, and apparently connected with the duke, who had admitted him into his secret confidence. Fowler, at the same time, had insinuated himself into the good graces of Mauvissiere, the resident French ambassador at the court of Elizabeth; and by pretending a devoted attachment to French interests and the cause of the captive Queen of Scots, he had become acquainted with much of the intentions and intrigues of Mary and her friends. This man was a spy of Walsingham's; and his letters to this statesman, detailing his secret conversations with Lennox and Mauvissiere, have been preserved. The picture which they present is striking. In their first interview, Lennox showed much satisfaction. "Your mother's house," said he to Fowler, "was the first I entered, in coming to Scotland, and the last I quitted, in leaving the country." The duke then told him that the French ambassador was not in London, but had been

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, ——— (Fowler, I think) to Walsingham, January, 1582-3.

sent for suddenly to court. This was a trick, he added, to prevent a meeting between him and Mauvissiere; and he heard, also, that the Queen of England would not see him; but, in truth, he had little to say to her, except to complain of the conduct of her ambassador in Scotland. At this moment their conference was broken off by some of the courtiers, who appeared dissatisfied that they should talk together; and the Master of Livingston, who was in the confidence of Lennox and his friends, joined the party. Fowler upon this took Livingston aside, and expressed his astonishment that the duke should have left Scotland, when he could muster so strong a party against his enemies. Livingston replied, that Lennox knew both his own strength and the king's good will; but that he had been forced to leave Scotland, "because the king mistrusted very much his own life and safety; having been sharply threatened by the lords, that, if he did not cause the duke to depart, he should not be the longest liver of them all."¹ Arran, it appeared, had also written to James, assuring him that the only surety for his life was to send Lennox out of Scotland; and Fowler, in his secret meetings with Mauvissiere the French ambassador, had the address to elicit from him, and communicate to Walsingham, the intended policy of France. La Motte Fenelon had been sent, he said, to renew the old league with Scotland; to offer succour to the young king, if he found him in captivity, and a guard for the security of his person; to promise pensions to the principal noblemen in Scotland, as they had in Cardinal Beaton's time; and, if possible, to advise a marriage with Spain. As to James's religious senti-

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, January 5, 1582-3. Fowler used a mark, or cipher, for his name.

ments, Lennox had assured Mauvissiere that the young king was so constant to the reformed faith, that he would lose his life rather than forsake it; and when the ambassador asked the duke whether he, too, was a Huguenot, he declared that he professed the same faith as his royal master.¹

At the same time that he thus fathomed the schemes of Lennox and the French court, Walsingham had secured and corrupted another agent of the captive queen, who, on the discovery of his practices with Mary and the English Catholics, had, as we have above seen, been thrown into prison by Elizabeth. This was that same Archibald Douglas, above mentioned as a man of considerable ability and restless intrigue. It had been proposed by Lennox to bring Douglas back to Scotland, and employ his power and talents against the English faction and the Kirk; but the young king had shrunk from receiving a man stained with his father's blood: and the prisoner, anxious for his freedom, was ready to purchase it by betraying the secrets of his royal mistress; consenting to plot against her with the same activity which he had exerted in her behalf.² We shall soon perceive the success of this base scheme, and its fatal influence upon the fate of Mary.

In the mean time, Elizabeth gave an audience to Colvile, the ambassador of Gowrie and the Kirk, and assured him of her entire approval of their spirited proceedings against Lennox. She cautioned him, in strong terms, against French intrigues; observing, that though the king promised fair, yet, as the recent conspiracy for seizing his person plainly showed,

¹ Fowler to Walsingham, January 19, 1582-3. Also, same (as I think) to Walsingham, January, 1582-3.

² State paper Office, ——— to Walsingham, January, 1582-3.

“ *Satanas non dormit* ;” and she concluded by a general assurance of support, and a promise to restore Archibald Douglas to his native country, as soon as he had cleared himself from the accusations against him in England.¹ Scotland, during these transactions, must have been in a state of extraordinary excitement: it was a busy stirring stage, upon which the young king, the ministers of the Kirk, the French ambassador, and Gowrie, with the rest of the Ruthven lords, acted their different parts with the utmost zeal and activity. James, whom necessity had made an adept in political hypocrisy, or, as he sometimes styled it, king-craft, pretended to be completely reconciled to the departure of Lennox, and said nothing in condemnation of the violent conduct of his opponents; whilst he secretly intrigued for the recall of his favourite, and anticipated the moment when he should resume his liberty, and take an ample revenge upon his enemies. The ministers, on their side, deemed the season too precious to be neglected; they had expelled the man whom they considered the emissary of Antichrist, the young king’s person was in the hands of their friends, and they determined that he should remain so.

Such being the state of things, the arrival of Monsieur de Menainville the French ambassador, and his request to have a speedy audience of the king, aroused them to instant action. From the pulpits resounded the notes of warning and alarm: France was depicted as the stronghold of idolatry; the French king pointed out as the tiger who glutted himself with the blood of God’s people; it became amongst them a matter of serious debate whether it were lawful to receive any ambassador from an idola-

¹ State-paper Office, January 18, 1582-3, Her Majesty’s answer to Mr Colville’s negotiation.

tor; and when the more violent could not carry their wishes, and it was decided that, "in matters politick," such a messenger might be permitted to enter the kingdom, a committee was appointed to wait upon the young king, and read him a solemn lesson of admonition.¹ In this interview James behaved with spirit, and proved a match in theological and political controversy for the divines who came to instruct him. These were, Pont, Lawson, Lindsay, and Davison; and, on entering the royal cabinet, they found Gowrie, the justice-clerk, and others of the council, with the king, who thanked them for their advice, but observed that he was bound by the law of nations to use courtesy to all ambassadors. Should an envoy come from the pope, or even from the Turk, still he must receive him. This Lawson stoutly controverted; but the king not only maintained his point, but took occasion to blame the abuse with which this minister had assailed the French monarch. "As for that," said they, "the priests speak worse of your grace in France, than we of the King of France in Scotland."—"And must ye imitate them in evil?" retorted James. "Not in evil," was their answer, "but in liberty. It is as fair for us to speak the truth boldly, as they boldly speak lies;² and if we were silent, the chronicles would speak and reprove it."—"Chronicles," said James, "ye write not histories when ye preach;" upon which Davison whispered in Lawson's ear, that preachers had more authority to declare the truth in preaching, than any historiographer in the world. Gowrie then observed, that as hasty a riddance as might be, should be got of the French ambassadors, and the ministers took their leave; but Davison

¹ MS. Calderwood, pp. 1247, 1251, inclusive, British Museum.

² "Lies," lies.

lingered for a moment behind his brethren, craved a private word in the king's ear, and remonstrated *sotto voce* against his profane custom of swearing in the course of his argument. "Sir," said he, "I thought good to advertise you, but not before the rest, that ye swore and took God's name in vain too often in your speeches." James was nowise displeased with this honest freedom; but, accompanying the reverend monitor to the door of the cabinet, put his hand lovingly upon his shoulder, expressed his thanks for the reproof, and, above all, lauded him for the unusually quiet manner in which it had been administered.¹

No such reserve or delicacy, however, was shown by the ministers to the French ambassadors; and Monsieur De Menainville, a man of great spirit, was compelled to vindicate their privileges in his first public audience. It had been debated by the Kirk, with a reference to their arrival, whether private masses should be permitted under any circumstances; and aware of this, he had scarcely risen from kissing the king's hand, when he put on his cap, and boldly claimed the privileges which belonged to his office. "I am come," said he, "from the most Christian King of France, my sovereign, to offer all aid to the establishment of quietness; and being an ambassador, and not a subject, I crave to be treated as such; and as I have food allotted for my body, so do I require to be allowed the food of my soul, I mean the mass; which if it is denied me, I may not stay and suffer a Christian prince's authority and embassy to be violated in my person."² This spirited address made much noise at the time, and drew from Mr James Lawson, on the succeeding Sabbath, a "counterblast" of defiance,

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1250, 1252.

² Ibid. fol. 1253.

in which, seizing the opportunity of elucidating the mission of the King of Babylon, he "pointed out the French ambassage," and denounced Monsieur De Menainville as the counterpart of the blasphemous and railing Rabshakeh. Nor was this all: the indignation of the Kirk was roused to a still higher pitch, when the king commanded the magistrates of the capital to give (as had been usual in such cases) a farewell banquet to De la Motte Fenelon. This ambassador now proposed to return to France, leaving his colleague, Monsieur De Menainville, to watch over the interests of that kingdom in Scotland; and nothing could equal the abuse and opprobrious terms which were employed, to convince men of the horror of such a proposal. Even the sacred ornament of the cross, which La Motte, who was a knight of the order of the "Saint Esprit," wore upon his mantle, was described as the badge of Antichrist; and when the influence of the ministers was found insufficient to stay the feast, a solemn fast was proclaimed for the same day, to continue as long as the alleged profane entertainment was enacting. At this moment, the scene presented by the capital was extraordinary. On one side, the king and his courtiers indulging in mirth and festive carousal; whilst on the other was heard the thunder of the Kirk, and its ministers "crying out all evil, slanderous, and injurious words that could be spoken against France;" and threatening with anathema and excommunication the citizens who had dared to countenance the unhallowed feast.¹

Meanwhile the king became every day more weary of his captive condition; and secretly favoured the efforts of De Menainville, who remained in Scotland,

¹ Spottiswood, p. 324. Historie of James the Sext, pp. 196, 197. MS. Calderwood, p. 1253.

and spared neither money nor promises in drawing together a faction against Gowrie and his associates. It was necessary, however, to act slowly and with great caution, for the keen eyes of Bowes and Davison, Elizabeth's agents at the Scottish court, early detected these intrigues. Walsingham, too, was informed of the frequent communications which took place between the captive queen and her son; and his spies and agents on the continent sent him, almost daily, information of the correspondence of the English refugees and foreign Catholics with their friends in England.¹ Had Elizabeth seconded, as was necessary, the indefatigable efforts of her ministers, it can hardly be doubted that she would have overthrown the efforts of France; but her parsimony was so excessive,² that Walsingham found himself compelled to renounce many advantages which the slightest sacrifice of money would have secured. It was in vain that she commanded Bowes and Davison to remonstrate with the young king; to warn him of the confederacies of foreign princes against religion; to point out the great forces lately raised in France; to declare her astonishment at his suffering the insolence of De Menainville, and receiving, as she heard he had done, with complacency, the congratulations of La Motte on his intended "association" with his mother, the Queen of Scots. It was in vain that she expressed her alarm at the report which had reached her, that he meant to recall the Duke of Lennox from France, and restore the Earl of Arran to his liberty; in vain that she begged him to peruse the letter written to him with her own hand, expressing

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1254.

² Orig. Minute, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, March 2, 1582-3. Also, State-paper Office, same to same, Feb. 27, 1582-3.

her opinion of that turbulent man whose ambition knew no limits, and would inevitably cast his state into new troubles. These remonstrances James, who was an early adept in diplomatic hypocrisy, received with expressions of gratitude and devotedness; but they did not in the slightest degree alter his efforts to regain his freedom, and strengthen his party; whilst, with a talent and sagacity superior to his years, he controlled the more violent of his friends, forbade all sudden movements, and calmly watched for a favourable moment to put forth his strength, and resume his freedom.

This patience, indeed, was still necessary; for, although gradually losing ground, the strength of Gowrie, and the faction of the Kirk, was yet too powerful for their opponents; and a convention having been held by them in the capital, (18th April, 1583,) it was resolved to assemble parliament. Against this measure James, who dreaded the proscription of his friends, and the total overthrow of his designs, remonstrated in the strongest terms, and even to tears, when his request was denied. He prevailed so far, however, as to have the meeting of the three estates delayed till October; and cheerfully consented that a friendly embassy should be despatched to England. To this service, two persons of very opposite principles were appointed: Colonel Stewart, the brother of the Earl of Arran, who was much in the king's confidence, and had been bribed by De Menainville; and Mr John Colville, who was attached to Gowrie and the Ruthven lords. Their open instructions were to communicate to Elizabeth, from the king, the measures he had adopted for the security and tranquillity of his realm; to request her approval and assistance; to move her to restore the lands in England which belonged to his

grandfather the Earl of Lennox, and the Countess of Lennox his grandmother, and to have some consultation on his marriage.¹ They were, lastly, enjoined to make strict inquiry whether any act was contemplated in prejudice of his succession to the English crown, and, if possible, to ascertain the queen's own feelings upon this delicate subject.² De Menainville the French ambassador still lingered in Scotland, although he had received his answer and applied for his passports;³ but the king was unwilling that he should leave court before he had completely organized the scheme for his delivery. Of all these intrigues Walsingham was fully aware: for De la Motte Fenelon, in passing through London,⁴ had informed Fowler of the great coalition against the Ruthven lords; and Fowler, of whose treacherous practices the ambassador had no suspicion, told all again to Walsingham.⁵ It appeared, from these revelations that La Motte had in his pocket, to be presented to his master the French king, a list of the most powerful noblemen in Scotland who had banded together for the king's delivery. These were the Earls of Huntley, Arran, Athole, Montrose, Rothes, Morton, Eglinton, Bothwell, Glencairn, and Crawford, with the Lords Hume and Seton. The young king himself had secretly assured La Motte Fenelon, "that, although he had two eyes, two ears, and two hands, he had but one heart, and that was French;"⁶ and so successfully had De Menainville

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1257. State-paper Office, April, 1583, Instructions to Colonel Stewart.

² Instructions to Colonel Stewart, *ut supra*.

³ Calderwood MS. fol. 1265.

⁴ La Motte arrived in London about the 20th February, 1582-3. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, February 20, 1582-3.

⁵ State-paper Office, Fowler to Walsingham, March 28, 1583.

⁶ State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison and Bowes, March 9, 1582-3. Orig. Minute.

laboured, that he had not only strengthened his own faction, but sown such distrust and jealousy amongst its opponents, that Gowrie, their chief leader, began to tremble for his safety, and vacillate in his fidelity to his former associates.¹

At this moment, Rocio Bandelli, Menainville's confidential servant, who was carrying his letters to Mauvissiere, his brother ambassador at the English court, betrayed his trust, opened the despatches, and gave copies of them to Sir Robert Bowes, who immediately communicated their contents to Walsingham. The young king, it appeared by their contents, had been urged to explode the mine, and at once destroy the lords who held him in durance; but he dreaded to lose Elizabeth's favour, and was convinced that a premature attempt would ruin all. His wish was to dissemble matters till the return of his ambassadors, Colonel Stewart and Colvile, from the mission to England; and they had not yet left Scotland. Mauvissiere, in the mean time, had warned Menainville, that Stewart, whose passion was money, was likely to betray him; and his reply is so characteristic that I insert it: "As to him who comes into England, (he means Stewart,) all your reasons, as far as my judgment goes, militate against your own opinion. For if it is his trade to be treacherous to all the world, why should he be unfaithful to me more than to any other? He loves money: granted; but to take my gold does not hinder him from receiving another's. May we not hope, that such a man will do more for two sums than for one? He is a party man: I admit it; but show me any man who has

¹ State-paper Office, Copie de la Premiere Lettre, endorsed, Menainville to La Motte; but I think the letter is written to Mauvissiere, March 28, 1583.

his own fortune at heart, and does not trim with the times? His chief interest lies in England, believe me, much less than in another place which you wot of, where he may hope to gain more by a certain way in which I have instructed him, (and which he will show you,) than by any other service in the world. For the rest, the game is a good game."¹

It must have been tantalizing to Walsingham, whose unceasing exertions had thus detected the plots of the French court in Scotland, to find that all their efforts to defeat them, and keep the English party together, were ruined by Elizabeth's extreme parsimony. In other matters, not involving expense, she was active and vigorous enough. Holt, the Jesuit, who was engaged in secret transactions with the Scottish Catholics, had been seized at Leith; and Elizabeth strongly recommended that he should be, as she expressed it, "substantially examined, and forced, by torture," to discover all he knew.² She wrote to Gowrie, and to the young king;³ she urged her busy agent, Bowes, to press Menainville's departure; but the moment that Burghley, the lord chancellor, and Walsingham, recommended the instant advance of ten thousand pounds to counteract the French influence in Scotland, "she did utterly dislike such a point, (to use Walsingham's words,) because it cast her into charges."⁴ Of this sum one half was to be given to the young king, and the rest expended upon the nobility, and the entertainment of a resident

¹ Copy, State-paper Office, Menainville to Mauvissiere, March 28, 1583. The original is in French. Also, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, March 28, 1583.

² State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, April 15, 1583.

³ MS. State-paper Office, Gowrie to Elizabeth, April 24, 1583.

⁴ MS. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, March 2, 1582-3. Also, Fowler to Walsingham, State-paper Office, April, 1583.

minister at the Scottish court; but, when moved in the business, the queen would not advance a farthing.

About this same time, and shortly before the Scottish ambassadors set out for England, the captive Queen of Scots, worn out with her long imprisonment, and weary of the perpetual dangers and anxieties to which the efforts of the Catholic party exposed her, renewed her negotiations with Elizabeth. Some months before this she had addressed a pathetic and eloquent appeal to that princess, imploring her to abate the rigour of her confinement, to withdraw support from the rebels who kept her son in durance, and to listen to the sincere offers she had so repeatedly made for an accommodation. Some of the passages in this letter were so touchingly expressed, that it is difficult to believe even the cold and politic heart of the English queen could have been insensible to them; but there were others so cuttingly ironical, and at the same time so true, that we cannot wonder the epistle remained, for a considerable time, unanswered.¹ At length, however, Elizabeth despatched Mr Beal, one of her confidential servants, a strict Puritan, and a man of severe saturnine temper, to confer with the imprisoned queen. It may be doubted whether she had any serious intentions of listening to Mary; but she was anxious, before she received the ambassadors, Stewart and Colvile, to probe her feelings, and ascertain how far there existed any mutual confidence between her and her son; and Beal's letters to Walsingham present us with an interesting picture of this conference. Lord Shrewsbury had been associated with him in the negotiation, of which he gave this account to the English secretary: "Since our last

¹ It will be found with a translation in Whitaker, vol. iv. p. 401.

despatch," said he, "this earl and I have once repaired unto this lady; and whilst he went out to meet some gentlemen of the country at the cockfight, it pleased her to spend some part of the afternoon in talk with me, of sundry matters of the estate of Scotland. * * In conclusion, she solemnly protested, before Nau,¹ that she and her son would do any thing they could to deserve her majesty's favour; and said that she was not so irreligious and careless of her honour and the force of an oath, as either before God or man she should be found to break that which she had promised; and she added, that she was now old, and that it was not for her now to seek any ambition or great estate, either in the one realm or the other, as in her youth she might; but only desired to live the rest of the small time of her life in quietness, in some honourable sort: she said she was diseased, and subject to many sicknesses, albeit, these many winters, she never was so well as she was this. She had a great heart which had preserved her, and desired now to be at rest, by the making of some good accord with her majesty, her son, and herself."

Beal then told Mary, that, in his opinion, such an agreement or association as had been contemplated was not desired in Scotland, either by the young king or the nobility.

"For the nobility," said she, "all that might hinder it are already gone. I have offended none of them which are now remaining; and therefore I doubt not but they will like thereof. These are principally to be doubted; Lindsay, Gowrie, Lochleven, Mar, and Angus. Lindsay is a hasty man, and was never thought to be of any great conduct or wit; and if he

¹ Monsieur Nau, Mary's secretary.

would do any thing to the contrary, the way to win him was, to suffer him to have a few glorious words in the beginning, and afterwards he would be wrought well enough. In the association passed between her and her son," she said, "all former offences done to her were pardoned;" adding, "that whatsoever account her majesty now maketh of Gowrie, his letters unto the Duke of Guise, sent by one Paul, which brought certain horses unto her son into Scotland, can declare that he will yield unto any thing—she marvelleth how her majesty dared trust him;" and said, "that because the Earl Morton did not, in a particular controversy that was between him and Lord Oliphant, do what he would, he was the cause of his death. * * Therefore," she said, "there was no stability or trust in him. Lochleven hath (as she said) made his peace already. Mar was her god-child, and, in her opinion, like to prove a coward and a naughty-natured boy. * * Angus had never offended her, and therefore she wished him no evil; but his surname never had been friends to the Stewarts, and she knew the king her son loved him not. * * Touching her son," she observed, "that he was cunning enough not to declare himself openly, in respect of his surety and danger of his life, being in his enemies' hands; and what," said she, "will you say if his own letters can be showed to that effect?" * * On another occasion, some days later, she confirmed this; observing, that, although James might appear to be satisfied with Gowrie and the rest, he only dissembled and waited his time, and must seek some foreign support if he did not embrace England, as he was too poor a king to stand alone against such a nobility; besides, Monsieur La Motte had told her he was well grown, and his marriage could not be delayed more than a year

or two. "His father was married when he was but nineteen years old, and the Duke of Lorraine when he was but sixteen. * * As to herself, she was sure," she said, "of a great party amongst the Scottish nobles, and had a hundred of their bands to maintain her cause, on the occurring of any good opportunity; yet she desired no ambitious estate, either in that country or this, but only her majesty's favour, and liberty."¹

Elizabeth having thus elicited as much as possible from Mary, and even procured from the captive princess some offers which might open the way to the recovery of her liberty, communicated all that had passed to Bowes, her ambassador at the Scottish court; and commanded him, in a secret interview with the young king, to sound his feelings regarding the restoration of his mother to liberty, and her association with himself in the government.² The matter was to be managed with the utmost secrecy; and the English queen was so anxious to receive an instant answer, that Walsingham recommended Bowes to set a gallows upon the packet, as he had done on his own; a significant hint sometimes given in those times to dilatory couriers.³ In all this, Elizabeth had no serious intention of either delivering her captive, or permitting her to be associated with her son: her wish was to defeat the whole scheme, by making the young prince jealous of his mother; and in this she appears to have succeeded. It is certain, at least, that in his secret interview with the English ambassador, James expressed himself with much suspicion

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Papers of Mary queen of Scots, April 17, 1583. Lord Shrewsbury and Mr Beal to Walsingham. Also, April 22, 1583, same to same.

² Minute, State-paper Office, April 25, 1583, Walsingham to Bowes.

³ Ibid.

and selfishness; and when Bowes showed him the paper containing Mary's offers to Elizabeth, he animadverted upon them with so much severity and acuteness, that, had the ambassador himself been the critic, we could scarcely have expected a more determined disapproval. Thus, in pointing to the eighth article, which related to their being jointly associated in the government, he doubted, he said, that some prejudice might come to him, as well at home as otherwise; since it seemed so worded, that she should not only be equal with him in authority and power, but also have the chief place before him: a matter dangerous to his state and title to this crown. Besides, he observed, sundry obstacles might be found in the person of his mother, which might annoy both him and her. She was a Papist; she had a council resident in France, by whom she was directed; she was so entangled with the pope, and others her confederates, that she could not deliver herself from suspicion. In honour she could not abandon her friends in France; and as, in the person of Queen Mary, (alluding to Elizabeth's predecessor,) he said, it was found, and seen to the world, that her own mild nature could not suppress the great cruelty of her councillors, but that their desire prevailed to persecute and torment God's people; to overthrow the whole state and government established by King Edward the Sixth; * * so the Protestants and others in England, desiring a peaceable government and estate, might both doubt to find the like effects in the person of his mother, and be affrayed to come under the rule of a woman thus qualified. These impediments and dangers, he added complacently, would not be found in his own condition, but rather an expectation of good parts or qualities promising better contentment and satisfaction. He

then, at Bowes' request, gave him the whole history of the correspondence between himself and the captive queen ; expressed the deepest gratitude to Elizabeth for this confidential communication ; and concluded by assuring him, that, as he was convinced Mary preferred herself before him in this proposal, till he saw much more clearly than he yet could, the bottom of the business, and her true meaning, he would go no farther without communicating with the English queen, and taking the advice of his council ; whose opinion he could not now have, on account of the solemn promise of secrecy to Elizabeth.¹

It is evident, through the whole of this negotiation, that James, if he expressed his real feelings, had a single eye to his own interest ; and cared little what became of his unfortunate mother, provided he secured an undivided sceptre in Scotland, and his succession to the English crown on Elizabeth's death. One only thing may be suggested in his defence : It is just possible that, in all this he dissembled, with the object of blinding Elizabeth and Bowes to his purposes for the recovery of his liberty and the overthrow of the English faction. But of this, the result will enable us more truly to judge.

In the beginning of May, Menainville, having fully organized the plot for the overthrow of the Ruthven lords and the return of the Duke of Lennox to power, took shipping from Leith for the court of France ; and so confidently did he express himself to his secret friends, that Bowes, who had a spy amongst them, told Walsingham he might look for a new world in August.²

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Edinburgh, May 1, 1583.

² MS. State-paper Office, April 24, 1583, Bowes to Walsingham. Ibid. May 1, 1583, same to same.

At the same time, the Scottish ambassadors, Colonel Stewart and Mr John Colvile, accompanied by Mr David Lindsay, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, who went at James's special request, repaired to London, where they were banqueted by Leicester, and soon admitted to an audience by Elizabeth. This princess was, as usual, profuse in her professions and advice to her young cousin the King of Scots, but exceedingly parsimonious of her money.¹ On the subject of his marriage, upon which he had solicited her advice, she promised to write herself; but referred all other points to her council. It was urged by Colvile, in the strongest terms, that the king's person could not be deemed in safety, unless the Scottish guard were increased. By this he meant, in plain language, that James could not be kept in captivity without a larger body of hired soldiers to hold the opposite faction in check. In them, to use the words of the ambassadors, "the life of the cause consisted."² And yet Elizabeth could scarcely be prevailed on to advance the paltry sum of three hundred pounds, which she insisted Bowes must pay upon his own credit: and "if," said Walsingham, when he sent him her commands in this matter, "her Majesty should happen to lay the burden upon you, I will not fail to see you myself discharged of the same."³ It had been one great purpose of Colonel Stewart, in this embassy, to ascertain whether most could be gained by the proffered friendship of England or France. He

¹ MS. State-paper Office, orig. minute, Walsingham to Bowes, May 9, 1583. MS. Calderwood, British Museum, fol. 1266. Also, MS. State-paper Office, Heads of Advice to be given to the King of Scots.

² MS. State-paper Office, Colvile to Walsingham, May 7, 1583.

³ MS. State-paper Office, minute, Walsingham to Bowes, May 9, 1583. See Proofs and Illustrations, No XVIII.

knew that the first object of his master the young king, was to strike the blow which should restore him to liberty : but this once secured, there remained the ulterior question, whether he should then “run the French or the English course.” And if the English queen had been content to relieve James of the load of debt which overpowered him ; if she had frankly communicated with him on the succession, and given him her advice upon his marriage ; there was every probability that he would have continued at her devotion. Only two days after the Scottish ambassadors had left court on their return, Bowes wrote from Edinburgh to Walsingham, that the Earls of Huntley, Athole, Montrose, and other barons, had met at Falkland ; that their “purpose to welter¹ the court and state” was no secret ; and that nothing but a satisfactory message from their royal mistress could save the English faction, and prevent a change of government.² Yet all this did not alter the resolution of the English queen. It was in vain that the ambassadors remonstrated with Walsingham ; that they reminded him of the promises made by the queen to the lords who had seized the king at Ruthven ; of the exhortations sent them, at the beginning of the action, to be constant ; of the assurances given to them of assistance both in men and money.³ Gowrie found himself cheated out of the sums he had spent upon the common cause : and perceiving the course which things must take, determined to make his peace with James on the first occasion. Bowes’ advances to the English faction were discouraged ; and Walsingham bitterly com-

¹ To welter ; to throw the government into a state of movement and disturbance.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, May 31, 1583.

³ Ibid. Colville and Stewart to Walsingham, May 18, 1581.

plained, that even the wretched three hundred pounds, which he had given from his own pocket, would turn out to be a dead loss to the ambassador, if he looked for payment to her majesty, and not to himself. "Thus, you see," said he, "notwithstanding it importeth us greatly to yield all contentment to that nation, [Scotland,] how we stick at trifles! I pray God we perform the rest of things promised."¹

At this crisis, intelligence arrived of the death of the Duke of Lennox in France.² He had been for some time in delicate health; but the Scottish king had looked forward with confidence to his recovery, and his grief was extreme. His feelings became more poignant when he found the deep affection which his favourite had expressed towards himself on his death-bed: enjoining his eldest son to carry his heart to his royal master in Scotland; and dying, apparently, in the reformed faith. On the day of his death he addressed a letter to James, informing him that his recovery was hopeless; and advising him to trust no longer to Angus, Mar, Lindsay, or Gowrie, whom he suspected were devoted to the English faction; but to give his confidence to those whom he termed his own party. A blank, however, had been left for their names, and he expired before it was filled up.³

This event threw an obstacle in the way of the immediate execution of that plot for his liberty, which the young king had been so long concerting, and from the success of which he had so fondly looked forward to the restoration of his favourite.⁴ Elizabeth seized

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, May 29, 1583.

² Ibid. Fowler to Walsingham, Tuesday, 1583.

³ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1268, 1269. Also, MS. State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, June 12, 1583.

⁴ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Bowes, June 5, 1583.

this interval again to sound the king, and some of the leading men in Scotland, regarding those recent negotiations which had been carried on with the captive queen for her restoration to liberty, and her intended "association" with her son. Both prince and council treated the idea with repugnance. James observed to Bowes, that although, as a dutiful son, he was ready to exert himself to procure the comfort and liberty of his mother, he was neither bound to this scheme of an "association," as she had asserted, nor would he ever consent to it in the form which she had proposed. The councillors were still more violently opposed to Mary on both points. "The association," they said, "had been proposed in Moray's regency, and absolutely rejected; and they were confident it would meet the same fate now; and for her liberty, if, under restraint, she could keep up so strong a faction, what would she do when free?"¹

This secret consultation between the English ambassador and the king took place at Falkland on the 24th June; and so completely had James blinded Bowes, that he left court and returned to the capital, unsuspecting of any change. Next day, John Colville, who, with Colonel Stewart, had just returned from England, assured Walsingham, "that all things were quiet, and that the last work of God, in the duke's departure, had increased the friendly disposition of the king."² But the letters were still on their way to England when all these flattering hopes were overthrown, and the ambassador received the astounding intelligence, that the king had thrown himself into

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Edinburgh, June 29, 1583.

² Ibid. Colville to Walsingham, June 25, 1583.

the castle of St Andrews; that the gates of the place were kept by Colonel Stewart and his soldiers; that none of the nobility had been suffered to enter, but such as were privy to the plot; and that the Earls of Crawford, Huntley, Argyle, and Marshal, were already with the monarch. On the heels of this news came a horseman in fiery speed from Mar to Angus; and this earl, the moment he heard of the movement, despatched a courier by night with his ring to Bothwell, urging him to gather his borderers and join him instantly; which he did. But the two barons were met, within six miles of St Andrews, by a herald, who charged them, on pain of treason, to disband their forces, and come forward singly. They obeyed, rode on, saw James, and received his orders to return home and remain at their houses till he called for them.¹

A few days showed that this sudden, though bloodless revolution, was complete. The king was his own master, and owed his freedom to the ability with which he had organized the plot and blinded his adversaries.² Gowrie, Mar, and Angus, the three lords who had led the faction of England, and kept him in durance, were in despair; but Gowrie, more politic than his associates, had secured a pardon for himself some time before the crisis.³ His colleagues in the triumvirate fled; and to crown all, Arran, who, there is every reason to believe, had been privy to the whole, after a brief interval returned to court, was embraced

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1270. Angus's messenger arrived on the Lord's day at night. MS. letter, Bowes to Walsingham, June 29, 1583, Bowes' Letter-book.

² MS. letter, Bowes' Letter-book, Bowes to Walsingham, July 3, 1583.

³ MS. State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, July 9, 1583. Calderwood MS. fol. 1273.

by the king, and soon resumed all his pride and ascendancy.¹

It was now nearly ten months since the raid of Ruthven; and as James had dissembled his feelings as long as he remained in the power of the leaders of that bold enterprise, the world looked not for any great severity against them. But the insult had sunk deeper than was believed; and it was soon evident that the king had determined to convince his people, that the person of the monarch and the laws of the land should neither be invaded nor broken with impunity. A proclamation was set forth,² which characterized the enterprise at Ruthven as treason; and whilst it assured his subjects, that all who acknowledged their offence should experience the mercy of their prince, avowed his resolution to proceed vigorously against the impenitent and refractory. At the same time, he published a declaration "of the good and pleasant death in the Lord" of his late dear cousin the Duke of Lennox; informing his subjects that this nobleman had departed in the profession of the true Christian faith established within his realm in the first year of his reign; and denouncing penalties upon all who pretended ignorance of this fact, or dared to contradict it, in speaking or in writing, in prose or rhyme.³

This public vindication of the memory and faith of his favourite, was intended to silence the ministers of the Kirk, who had deemed it their duty to cast out

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, August 5, 1583.

² MS. State-paper Office, copy of the proclamation, July 30, 1583. Also, Spottiswood, p. 326. Also, Bowes to Walsingham, July 31, 1583.

³ State-paper Office, copy of the proclamation for Lennox, July 27, 1583. Also, MS. letter, Bowes' Letter-book, July 31, 1583, Bowes to Walsingham.

some injurious speeches against the duke; one of them affirming that, as he thirsted for blood in his lifetime, so he died in blood:¹ an allusion to the disease of which he was reported to have fallen the victim. This harsh attack upon his favourite justly and deeply offended the king; and Lawson, the author of the calumny, having been commanded to appear at court, he, and a small company of his brother ministers, repaired to Dunfermline, and were conducted into the presence chamber. Here, owing to the recent changes, they found themselves surrounded with the strange faces of a new court. Soon after the king entered, and whilst they rose and made their obeisance, James, to their astonishment, took not the slightest notice, but passing the throne, which all expected he was to occupy, sat down familiarly upon a little coffer, and “eyed them all marvellous gravely, and they him, for the space of a quarter of an hour; none speaking a word; to the admiration of all the beholders.”² The scene, intended to have been tragic and awful, was singularly comic: and this was increased when the monarch, without uttering a syllable, jumped up from his coffer, and “glooming” upon them, walked out of the room. It was now difficult to say what should be done. The ministers had come with a determination to remonstrate with their sovereign against the recent changes; and he, it was evident, enraged at their late conduct, had resolved to dismiss them unheard; but, whilst they debated in perplexity, he relented in the cabinet, to which he had retired, and called them in. Pont then said they had come to warn him against alterations. “I see none,” quickly rejoined the king; “but there were some this time

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1270.

² Ibid.

twelvemonth, (alluding to his seizure at Ruthven :) where were your warnings then?" — "Did we not admonish you at St Johnston?" answered Pont. "And, were it not for our love to your grace," interrupted Mr David Ferguson, "could we not easily have found another place to have spoken our minds than here?" This allusion to their license in the pulpit made the king bite his lip : and the storm was about to break out, when the same speaker threw oil upon the waters, by casting in some merry speeches. His wit was of a homely and peculiar character. James, he said, ought to hear him, if any ; for he had demitted the crown in his favour. Was he not Ferguson, the son of Fergus the first Scottish king ? and had he not cheerfully resigned his title to his grace, as he was an honest man and had possession ? " Well," said James, " no other king in Europe would have borne at your hands what I have." — " God forbid you should be like other European kings !" was the reply ; " what are they but murderers of the saints ? — ye have had another sort of upbringing : but beware whom ye choose to be about you ; for, helpless as ye were in your cradle, you are in deeper danger now." — " I am a Catholic king," replied the monarch, " and may choose my own advisers." The word Catholic was more than some of the ministers could digest, and would have led to an angry altercation, had not Ferguson again adroitly allayed their excited feelings. " Yes, brethren," said he, turning to them, " he is a catholic ; that is, a universal king ; and may choose his company as King David did, in the hundred and first psalm." This was a master stroke ; for the king had very recently translated this psalm into English metre, and Ferguson took occasion to commend his verses in the highest terms. They then

again warned him against his present councillors; and one of the ministers, stooping down, had the boldness to whisper in his ear, that there was no great wisdom in keeping his father's murderers, or their posterity, so near his person. Their last words were stern and solemn. "Think not lightly, sir," said they, "of our commission; and look well that your deeds agree with your promises, for we must damn sin in whoever it be found; nor is that face upon flesh that we may spare, in case we find rebellion to our God, whose ambassadors we are. Disregard not our threatening; for there was never one yet in this realm, in the place where your grace is, who prospered after the ministers began to threaten him." At this, the king was observed to smile, probably ironically, but he said nothing; and, as they took their leave, he laid his hand familiarly on each. Colonel Stewart then made them drink, and they left the court.¹ I have given this interview at some length, as it is strikingly characteristic both of the prince and the ministers of the Kirk.

On receiving intelligence of the revolution in Scotland, Elizabeth wrote, in much alarm, to Bowes,² and resolved to send an ambassador with her advice and remonstrance to the king. She hesitated, however, between Lord Hunsdon her cousin, and the now aged Walsingham; and two months were suffered to pass before she could be brought to a decision. During this interval, all was vigour upon the part of the king and Arran, whilst despondency and suspicion paralyzed and divided their opponents. Angus, the head of the house of Douglas, and one of the most powerful noble-

¹ MS. Calderwood, fol. 1272.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, 10th July, 1583, Walsingham to Bowes.

men in the country, was banished beyond the Spey;¹ Mar and Glammis were ordered to leave the country;² the Laird of Lochleven was imprisoned, and commanded to deliver his houses to Rothes; Lord Boyd and Colvile of Easter Wemyss retired to France; whilst, on the other hand, the friends of the Queen of Scots, and those who had been all along attached to the interests of France, saw themselves daily increasing in favour and promoted to power. Those officers of the king's household, who were suspected of being favourable to England, were removed, to make way for others of the opposite party. It was observed that James had given a long secret conference to young Graham of Fintry, a devoted Catholic, lately come from France, with letters (as Bowes believed) from the Duke of Guise.³ It was even noted, that a present of apples and almonds had been sent from Menainville to the king; a token concerted to show that all was ripe for the completion of the plot which he had devised when last in Scotland.⁴ In short, although the young king continued to make the fairest professions to Bowes, and addressed a letter to Elizabeth, in which he expressed the greatest devotion to her service, and the most anxious desire to preserve the amity between the two kingdoms, it was evident to this ambassador that all was false and dissembled.

Amid these scenes of daily proscriptions and royal

¹ Spottiswood, p. 326.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, September 19, 1583.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, 27th July, 1583.

⁴ Ibid. Also, MS. State-paper Office, July 29, 1583, Servants of the King's house discharged.

hypocrisy, the veteran statesman, Sir Francis Walsingham, arrived at the Scottish court.¹ His instructions directed him to require satisfaction from the king regarding the late strange actions which had taken place, so inconsistent with his friendly professions to his royal mistress; he was to use every effort to persuade James to reform the accident, which the queen was ready to impute rather to evil counsel than to his own wishes; and to assure him that, if he consented to alter this new course, he should not fail to taste of her goodness.² But it required a very brief observation to convince Walsingham that his mission was too late. He found himself treated with coldness. His audience was unnecessarily delayed; and when at last admitted, the young king was in no compliant mood, although he received him with much apparent courtesy.³ To his complaints of the late changes, James replied, that he had every wish to maintain friendship with her majesty: but this he would now be better able to accomplish with a united than a divided nobility. Before this, two or three lords had usurped the government; they had engaged in dangerous courses, and had brought their ruin upon themselves. Walsingham then attempted to point out the mischief that must arise from displacing those councillors who were best affected to Elizabeth; but James sharply, and "with a kind of jollity," (so wrote the old statesman to his royal mistress,) reminded

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 6, 1583. He came to Edinburgh 1st September. MS. Calderwood, fol. 1278. See Proofs and Illustrations, No. XIX.

² MS. State-paper Office, Instructions for Sir F. Walsingham, 13th August, 1583.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 6, 1583, Edinburgh.

him that he was an absolute king; that he would take such order with his subjects as best liked himself;¹ and that he thought his mistress should be no more curious to examine the affections of his council than he was of hers. "And yet," said Walsingham, "you are but a young prince yet, and of no great judgment in matters of government; and many an elder one would think himself fortunate to meet an adviser like my mistress. But be assured, she is quite ready to leave you to your own guidance; I have not come down to seek an alliance for England, which can live well enough without Scotland, but to charge your majesty with unkind dealing to her highness, and to seek redress for past errors."² The ambassador then complained of some late outrages which had been committed by the Scots upon the borders; and the king having promised inquiry, and requested to see him next day in private, he took his leave. This secret conference, however, does not appear to have taken place. The probability is, that Arran, who carried himself towards Walsingham with great pride, had prevented it; and, having bid adieu to the king, the English secretary wrote to Burghley in these ominous terms: "You will easily find that there is no hope of the recovery of this young prince; who, I doubt, (having many reasons to lead me so to judge,) if his power may agree to his will, will become a dangerous enemy. * * * There is no one thing will serve better to bridle him, than for her majesty to use the Hamiltons in such sort as they may be at her devotion."³

¹ MS. letter, original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Elizabeth, September 11, 1583.

² Ibid. September 11, 1583, St Johnston.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Burghley, September 11, 1583.

This last hint, of the use which might be made of Lord John and Lord Claud Hamilton, the sons of the late Duke of Chastelherault, who had been long in banishment, and now lived in England, was acted upon by Bowes; and brief as had been Walsingham's stay in Scotland, he had found time to sow the seeds of a counter-revolution, by which he trusted to overwhelm Arran, and place the king's person once more in the power of the friends of Elizabeth. By his advice, Bowes bribed some of the leading nobles; and in less than a week after Walsingham's departure, his busy agent wrote to him, that the good course begun by him in that realm was prosperous; that he had met with many of the persons appointed, who promised to do what was committed to them; and that already the well-affected were in comfort, and their adversaries in fear.¹

This new plot Walsingham communicated to Elizabeth in a letter which has unfortunately disappeared, but to which he thus alluded in writing to Burghley from Durham, on his journey back to the English court: "There is an offer made to remove the ill-affected from about the king, which I have sent to her majesty. They require speedy answer: and that the matter may be used with all secrecy, I beseech your lordship, therefore, that when her majesty shall make you privy thereunto, you will hasten the one and advise the other."² Arran's quick eye, however, had detected these machinations: orders were given to double the royal guards, the strictest watch was kept at court;³ and although a body of forty horse

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, September 17, 1583.

² Ibid. Walsingham to Burghley, September 22, 1583, Durham.

³ Ibid. Bowes to Walsingham, October 22, 1583.

were observed one night to hover round Falkland, and all in the palace dreaded an attack, the alarm passed away. The "*Bye-course*" (the name given to the projected conspiracy) was thus abandoned; and Elizabeth, who was dissatisfied with Walsingham's ill success, determined to reserve her judgment on the Scottish affairs, and recalled Bowes from Scotland.¹

This coldness in the English queen completely discouraged the opponents of the late revolution; and before the end of the year, the king and Arran had triumphed over every difficulty. Angus, Mar, and Glamis, the Lairds of Lochleven and Cleish, the Abbots of Dunfermline and Cambuskenneth, with others who had acted in concert with Gowrie, were compelled to acknowledge their offences and sue for mercy; whilst a convention was held at Edinburgh, in which the good sense and moderation of the king were conspicuous, in restoring something of confidence and peace even to the troubled elements of the Kirk.² Considering the difficulty of this task, it gives us no mean idea of James's powers at this early age, when we find him succeeding in taming the fiery and almost indomitable spirits of one party of the ministers, and reconciling to his present policy the more placable division of the Presbyterians. The great subject of contention between the court and the Scottish clergy was the outrage committed at Ruthven; a transaction which had received the solemn sanction of the Kirk, but which the prince, however compelled to disguise his sentiments at the time, justly considered rebellion. On this point James was firm. He had recently made

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Elizabeth to Bowes, September 22, 1583. Also, *ibid.* Bowes to Walsingham, October 15, 1583. Also, *ibid.* Walsingham to Bowes, September 30, 1583, York.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Nov. 1, 1583.

every effort to bring the offenders to a confession of their crime; and had appointed some commissioners, chosen from the ministers and the elders of the Kirk, to confer with them upon the subject.¹ But this gentle measure not producing all the effects contemplated, a parliament was convened at Edinburgh, and an act unanimously passed, which pronounced "the surprise and restraint of the royal person" in August preceding "a crime of high treason, of pernicious example, and meriting severe punishments." The former act of council, which had approved of it, was abrogated, as having been passed by the rebels themselves during the restraint of their sovereign; and the king now declared his determination to punish, with the severest penalties, all who refused to sue for pardon, whilst he promised mercy to all who acknowledged their offence.²

These determined measures were at length successful; and the great leaders of the faction, who had hitherto remained in sullen and obstinate resistance, submitted to the king's mercy. Angus retired beyond the Spey; the Earl of Mar, the Master of Glamis, with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, repaired to Ireland; Lord Boyd, with the Lairds of Lochleven and Easter Wemyss, passed into France; and other of their associates were imprisoned, or warded within the strictest bounds. Mr John Colville alone, though he had been as deeply implicated as them all, refusing submission, fled to Berwick;³ whilst Gowrie, who had already obtained pardon, reiterated his vows of obedience, and remained at court.⁴ It

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Nov. 28, 1583.

² MS. Act, State-paper Office, Dec. 7, 1583.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Dec. 29, 1583.

⁴ Ibid.

was impossible, however, wholly to subdue the Kirk. Mr John Durie, one of the ministers, denounced the recent proceedings in the pulpit at Edinburgh, and was followed in this course by Melvil the Principal of the college of St Andrews. But Durie was compelled, by threats of having his head set upon the West Port, one of the public gates of the city, to make a qualified retraction;¹ and Melvil only saved himself from imprisonment by a precipitate flight to Berwick.² This man, whose temper was violent, and who was a strict Puritan in religion and a Republican in politics, when called before the council, resolutely declined their jurisdiction; affirming that he was amenable only to the presbytery for any thing delivered in the pulpit; and when the king attempted to convince him of the contrary, he arrogantly told him, that "he perverted the laws both of God and man." The removal of so stern an opponent was peculiarly grateful to the court; and as James had assured the commissioners of the Kirk, that he was determined to maintain the reformed religion, and to lay before his council the remedies they recommended for restoring tranquillity to the country, it was anxiously hoped that the distracted and bleeding state might be suffered to enjoy some little interval of repose.³

During these transactions, the young Duke of Lennox, having left the French court, arrived in Scotland. He was accompanied by the Master of Gray, a person destined to act a conspicuous part in future years, and whom the king had expressly sent on this mission. On coming ashore, at Leith, they were met by Arran and Huntley, and carried to Kinneil, where the court

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Dec. 29, 1583.

² Spottiswood, p. 330.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Nov. 1, 1583.

then lay. James received the son of his old favourite with the utmost joy; restored him to his father's honours and estates; and as he was then only thirteen, committed him to the government of the Earl of Montrose.¹

It was now expected that a period of order and quiet would succeed the banishment of the disaffected lords; for although the counsels of Arran were violent, there was a wiser and more moderate party in the king's confidence, which checked, for a little while, his rashness and lust of undivided power. To this class belonged the celebrated Sir James Melvil, with his brother Sir Robert, and some of the more temperate spirits in the Kirk. One of these, Mr David Lindsay, accounted amongst the best of the brethren, addressed a letter at this time to Bowes, the late ambassador, in which he spoke in high terms of the young king. He advised Bowes to write to James; informed him that advice from him was sure to be well received; and added, that his royal master had recently, in private, assured him, that Secretary Walsingham was the wisest man he had ever spoken with; that the more he had pondered on the counsels he had given him, in their late meeting, the better and more profitable they appeared. "I perceive," said he to Bowes, "his majesty begins to take better tent [heed] to his own estate and weal nor [than] he has done

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, November 16, 1583. Ibid. same to same, Nov. 20, 1583. Spottiswood, p. 328. The affection of this prince for the family of his old favourite is a pleasing trait in his character. Nothing could make him forget them. Some time after this, two of his daughters were brought over from France, of whom he married one to the Earl of Huntley, the other to the Earl of Mar. A third was destined to an equally honourable match, but she had vowed herself to God, and could not be won from the cloister; and in later years, after his accession to the English crown, James received, with undiminished interest, the youngest son of the house, and advanced him to great honour.

heretofore; and espies the nature of such as rather regards their own particular, nor the quietness of this country and his majesty's welfare, which compels him to see some better order taken, and that by the advice of the most upright and discreet men that he can find in this country; for he showed me himself, that he got counsellors enough to counsel him to wound and hurt his commonwealth, but finds very few good chirurgeons to help and heal the same, and therefore must play that part himself."¹

Little did this excellent member of the Kirk dream, that at the moment he was breathing out his own secret wishes, and those of his sovereign, for peace, into the bosoms of Bowes and Walsingham, and entreating their co-operation as peacemakers, these very men were busy getting up a new rebellion in Scotland, to which their royal mistress gave her full approval; but nothing can be more certain. The chief conspirators were the banished noblemen, Angus, Mar, the Master of Glamis, the Earl of Bothwell, Lord Lindsay, and their associates. Of these, Mar and Glamis passed over secretly from their retreat in Ireland; Angus left his refuge in the north; the two sons of the Duke of Chastelherault, Lord Claud and Lord John Hamilton, were sent down by Elizabeth from England to the borders; whilst Gowrie, who, to cover his purposes of treason, had sought and obtained the king's license to visit the continent, lingered in Scotland to arrange the plan of the insurrection.² In England, the great agent, in

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Mr David Lindsay to Mr Bowes, Leith, November 2, 1583. See an account of Mr David Lindsay, in Lord Lindsay's "Lives of the Lindsays," vol. i. pp. 215-217; a most interesting and agreeable work, privately printed by that nobleman.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, Jan. 20, 1583-4. Explained, as to the meaning of the ciphers, by the letter of Bowes to Walsingham, State-paper Office, December 29, 1583. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, January 24,

communicating with Walsingham and Bowes, was that same Mr John Colvile with whom we are already acquainted ; and his letters, as well as those which yet remain of Bowes and Walsingham, admit us into the secrets of the conspiracy, and distinctly show the approval of the English queen and her ministers. Gowrie, as it appears, had hesitated for some time between submitting to the king and embarking in the plot ; but Bowes wrote to Walsingham, on the 4th March, 1583-4, that he had abandoned all thoughts of concession, and stood faithful to his friends. He added, that the ground and manner of the purpose was known to very few, as it was thought requisite to keep it secret till the time of the execution approached. Some delay, however, took place regarding the course to be pursued with a certain bishop, who was considered too powerful an antagonist to be continued in power ; and Colvile, who managed the plot in London, had a secret meeting with Walsingham on this delicate point ; after which, he wrote to him in these words : “ Concerning the bishop, the more I think of the matter, the more necessity I think it, that he, and all other strangers of his opinion, were removed ; for it is a common proverb, *Hostes si intus sint, frustra clauduntur fores ; neque antequam expellantur tute cubandum est.*”¹ But although Bowes, Walsingham, and Colvile, were no mean adepts in planning an insurrection, they had to compete with an antagonist in Arran, who detected and defeated all their machinations. His eyes were

1583-4. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, February 13, 1583-4. Also, State-paper Office, B.C. Forster to Walsingham, March 28, 1584. Also, MS. Calderwood, British Museum, 4736, fol. 1315.

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Colvile to Bowes, March 23, 1583-4. This must, I think, have been either Bishop Adamson, or Montgomery bishop of Glasgow.

in every quarter: not a movement taken by Gowrie, or Mar, or Glamis, escaped him. He was aware that a band had been drawn up, and signed by many of his enemies in Scotland, by which they solemnly engaged to assassinate him, and compelled the king to admit them to his councils.¹ He had received information that, in the end of March, a general assembly of the nobles, who trusted to overturn the government, would be held at Perth. But he awaited their operations with indifference; for he knew that the Earls of Glencairn and Athole, upon whom Gowrie, Angus, and Mar, principally depended, were traitors to their own friends, and had already revealed every thing to him. When the meeting accordingly did take place, and the insurgent noblemen called upon all who were solicitous for the advancement of the Word of God, and the setting forth of his glory, to join their banner, their appeal found no response in the hearts of the people, and the assembly fell to pieces without striking a blow.²

This premature movement, and its ill success, intimidated the conspirators, and gave new courage to Arran and the king, who sent a secret messenger to Elizabeth, offering the most favourable terms of accommodation, and assuring her, that in supporting Gowrie and his friends, she was the dupe of some dangerous and unquiet spirits, whose purposes varied every month, and who were not even true to each other.³ The queen hesitated. Colvile had recently

¹ *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 203. Also, MS. Calderwood, British Museum, 4736, Ayscough, fol. 1316.

² MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 5, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, April 10, 1584. Also, *ibid.* same to same, fol. 3, Berwick, April 5, 1584. MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Forster to Walsingham, April 2, 1584.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Colvile to his brother the Laird of

received from his brother, the Laird of Cleish, one of the conspirators, certain articles of agreement between them and the English queen, which they expected to be signed. These he was to correct and present to Elizabeth. But this princess was in a dilemma. If she signed the articles, she bound herself to the faction; and should they be discomfited, she furnished evidence of her encouraging rebellion in subjects; an accusation which Arran and his friends would not be slow to use. On the other hand, Colvile maintained that the late failure at Perth was to be ascribed to the folly and impatience of some of their friends; and that now all was ready for the outbreak and success of the great plot. Gowrie was at Dundee, waiting only for the signal from his fellow-conspirators. Angus, Mar, and Glamis, were ready to rise and march upon Stirling. If they succeeded, the power, probably the life, of Arran was at an end; a new order of things must be established in Scotland; and the men whom she had just deserted would be in possession once more of the person of the young king, and rule all. At this crisis, this busy partisan, Colvile, exerted himself to the utmost. He found that the English queen, whilst she verbally gave her warm approval to the insurgents, "expressing her gracious and motherly care of the well-doing of the noblemen," steadily refused either to sign their articles, or to receive any messenger from them, till they were openly in arms. He implored them to be contented with these general assurances; and declared, that immediate action, without sending any farther advertisements to England, could alone secure success. The examples by which he confirmed this argument

Cleish, April 16, 1584. Endorsed by Cecil, Mr Colvile; and by Colvile himself, Copy of my last letter sent to Scotland.

were the murder of Riccio, the seizure of Queen Mary at Faside, and the recent "raid of Ruthven."

"If," said he, "advertisements had been sent to England before the execution of Davie, the taking of the Queen at Faside, and of Arran at Ruthven, I think none of these good actions had ever been effectuate. But you know, that after all these enterprises were execute, her majesty ever comforted the enterprisers thereof in all lawful manner, albeit she was not made privy to their intentions. Chiefly after the late attempt at Ruthven, it is fresh remembrance how timeously Sir George Carey and Mr Robert Bowes, her majesty's ambassadors, arrived to countenance the said cause. But now, when men does nothing but sit down to advise when it is high time to draw sword and defend, and will lie still in the mire unstirring, and expecting till some friend passing by shall pull them out, it appears well that they either diffide in the equity of their cause, or else are bewitched, and so useless, and that they can feel nothing till they be led to the shambles, as was the poor Earl of Morton.¹ If," he proceeded, "matters were resolutely ordered, what more consultation is needed, (seeing religion, the king's honour, and all good men, is in extreme danger,) but first courageously, such as are agreed, to join together in secret manner for the king's deliverance, as was done at Ruthven; or if this cannot be, then to convene at some convenient place openly, publish proclamation to the people for declaration of their lawful and just cause, and so pursue the present adversaries till either they were apprehended or else reduced to some extremity."²

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, April 16, 1584, Mr Colvile to his brother. Colvile's ignorance of the *secret* history of Riccio's murder is striking. See vol. v. of this History, pp. 332-338.

² Ibid. April 16, 1584, Mr Colvile to his brother.

When Colvile spoke of the poor Earl of Morton being led to the shambles, he little thought how soon his words were to prove prophetic in the miserable fate of Gowrie: but so it happened. Arran, who was informed of every particular, had quietly suffered the plot to proceed to the very instant of its execution. Having secretly instructed his own friends to be ready with their forces at an instant's warning, he did not move a step till his adversaries were in the field, and, by an overt act, had fixed upon themselves the crime of rebellion. The moment this was ascertained, and when he knew that Gowrie only waited at Dundee for a signal to join his friends, who were advancing upon Stirling, he despatched Colonel Stewart to arrest him; who, with a hundred troopers, coming suddenly to that town before sunrise, surrounded his castle. It was difficult, however, in these times of feudal misrule and hourly danger to find a Scottish baron unprepared; and the earl bravely held his house against all assailants for twelve hours. But he was at last overpowered, seized, and carried a prisoner to Edinburgh.¹ At the same moment that these scenes were acting at Dundee, word had been brought to the court, that the Earls of Mar and Angus, with the Master of Glamis, and five hundred horse, had entered Stirling, and possessed themselves of the castle; and when Stewart entered Edinburgh with his captive, he found it bristling with arms and warlike preparations; the drums beating, and the young king, in a high state of excitement, assembling his forces, hurrying forward his levies, and declaring that he would instantly proceed in person against them.²

¹ MS. letter, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 9, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, April 19, 1584.

² MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 13, Bowes to

So soon were the musters completed, that within two days an army of twelve thousand men were in the field; and James, surrounded by his nobles, led them on to Stirling. These mighty exertions, however, were superfluous. The insurgent lords did not dare to keep together in the face of such a force; and leaving a small garrison in the castle of Stirling, fled precipitately through east Teviotdale into England, and solicited the protection of Elizabeth.¹ As they passed Kelso in the night, Bothwell, their old friend, met them, and held a secret conference; but as such a meeting with traitors might have cost him his head, they agreed that at daybreak he should chase them across the border; which he did, acting his part in this counterfeit pursuit with much apparent heat and fury.² James then took possession of Stirling; the castle surrendered on the first summons; four of the garrison, including the captain, were hanged; Archibald Douglas, called the constable, was also executed; and it was soon seen that the utmost rigour was intended against all connected with the conspiracy.³

As its authors were the chief leaders of the Protestant faction, and its objects professed to be the preservation of religion, and the maintenance of the true Word of God, it was suspected that the ministers of the Kirk were either directly or indirectly implicated. Of these, three, Mr Andrew Hay, Mr James Lawson, and Mr Walter Balcanquel, were summoned to court; and two in particular, Galloway minister of Perth, and Carmichael minister of Haddington, were searched

Walsingham, Berwick, April 23, 1584. Ibid. fol. 13*, Bowes to Walsingham, Berwick, April 26, 1584.

¹ MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1321. ² Ibid.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Bowes to Walsingham, May 7, 1584.

for at their houses by the king's guard, but could not be found. They afterwards, with Polwart subdean of Glasgow, John Davison minister of Libberton, and the noted Andrew Melvil, fled to England.¹

In the mean time, it was determined to bring Gowrie to trial. Of his guilt, there was not the slightest doubt. He had been a chief contriver of the plot, and the most active agent in its organization: but there was some want of direct evidence; and a base device, though common in the criminal proceedings of these times, was adopted to supply it. The Earl of Arran, attended by Sir Robert Melvil, and some others of the privy councillors, whose names do not appear, visited him in prison; and professing great concern for his safety, informed him that the king was deeply incensed against him, believing that he had the chief hand in expelling his favourite, the Duke of Lennox. Gowrie declared, that his part in the disgrace of the duke was not deeper than that of his associates; but anxiously besought them, as old friends, to sue to the king for a favourable sentence. They replied, that to become intercessors for him in the present state of James's feelings, would only ruin themselves, and not serve him. "What, then," said he, "is to be done?"—"Our advice," said they, "is, that you write a general letter to the king, confessing your knowledge of a design against his majesty's person, and offering to reveal the particulars, if admitted to an audience. This will procure you an interview, which otherwise you have no chance of obtaining. You may then vindicate your innocence, and explain the whole to the king." "It is a perilous expedient," answered Gowrie. "I never entertained a thought

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Moyse's Memoirs, p. 50. *Historie of James the Sext*, p. 103.

against the king; but this is to frame my own dittay,¹ and may involve me in utter ruin.”—“How so?” said his crafty friends: “your life is safe if you follow our counsel; your death is determined on if you make no confession.” “Goes it so hard with me?” was Gowrie’s reply. “If there be no remedy, in case I had an assured promise of my life, I would not stick to try the device of the letter.” “I will willingly pledge my honour,” said Arran, “that your life shall be in no danger, and that no advantage shall be taken of your pretended confession.”² Thus entrapped, the unfortunate man wrote the letter as he was instructed; it was sent to the king, but he waited in vain for a reply; and on the trial, when the jury complained of defective evidence, and declared that they could find nothing to justify a capital condemnation, Arran, who, contrary to all justice and decency, was one of their number, drew the fatal letter from his pocket, and appealed to the accused whether he could deny his own handwriting. “It is mine assuredly,” said Gowrie; “nor can I deny it; but, my lords, this letter was written, these revelations were made, on a solemn promise of my life. You must remember it all,” said he, looking at Arran and turning to the lords who had accompanied him to the prison, “how at first I refused; how earnestly I asserted my innocence; how you swore to me, upon your honour and faith, that the king granted me my life, if I made this confession.” The lord advocate replied, that the lords had no power to make such a promise; and when the prisoner, with the energy of a man struggling between life and

¹ Dittay; accusation.

² MS. State-paper Office, Form of certain devices used by Arran and Sir R. Melvil against Gowrie, enclosed by Davison in a letter to Walsingham, dated May 27, 1584, Berwick.

death, appealed to their oaths, these pretended friends declared that by them no such promise had been made.¹ The jury then retired to consider their verdict; and as Arran rose to leave the room, Gowrie made a last effort to remind him of old times and early friendship; but his speech fell on a cold ear: and the prisoner, apparently indifferent, calling for a cup of wine, drank, and shook hands with some of his friends around him. He sent, also, by one of them, a pathetic message to his wife; begging him to conceal his fate from her, as she was just delivered of her child, and the news, if heard suddenly, might be fatal to her. At this moment the jury returned and declared him guilty, a sentence which he received with much firmness; then instantly rising to speak, the judge interrupted him, telling him that his time was short, as the king had already sent down the warrant for his execution. "Well, my lord," said he, "since it is the king's contentment that I lose my life, I am as willing to part with it as I was before to spend it in his service; and the noblemen, who have been upon my jury, will know the matter better hereafter. And yet, in condemning me, they have hazarded their own souls, for I had their promise. God grant my blood be not on the king's head! And now, my lords," continued the unfortunate man, "let me say a word for my poor sons. Let not my estates be forfeited. The matters are small for which I suffer. Failing my eldest boy, then, let my second succeed him." It was answered, he was found guilty of treason, and, by law, forfeiture must follow. The last scene of the tragedy was brief. He was allowed to retire for a few moments, with a minister, to his private devotions. He then walked out upon

¹ MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 24, Form of examination, and death of William earl of Gowrie, May 3, 1584.

the scaffold, asserted his innocence of all designs against the king's person to the people who were assembled; repeated the account of the base artifice to which he had fallen a victim; and turning to Sir Robert Melvil, who stood beside him, begged him to satisfy the headsman for his clothes, as he had left the dress in which he died to his page. The justice-clerk then assisted him to undo his doublet, and bare his neck; Gowrie himself tied the handkerchief over his eyes, and kneeling down, "smilingly," as it was remarked by an eye-witness, rested his head upon the block. It was severed from the body by a single blow; and his three friends, Sir R. Melvil, the justice-clerk, and Stewart of Traquair, wrapping the remains in the scarlet cloth which he had himself directed to be the covering of the scaffold, had them buried, after the head had been sewed on to the body.¹

Gowrie died firmly, and it is to be hoped, sincerely penitent; but even in this dark age of unscrupulous crime and aristocratic ambition few men had more need of repentance. His early age was stained with the blood of the unfortunate Riccio; he and his father being two of the principal assassins. In his maturer years, he accompanied Lindsay in that harsh and brutal interview with Mary, when they compelled her, in her prison at Lochleven, to sign the abdication of

¹ MS. British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 29. Account written by a person present at the trial.—It is difficult to reconcile the conduct of Sir Robert Melvil to Gowrie, as described by Davison, with this sentence in the above account; "He was buried by his three friends, Sir Robert Melvil, the justice-clerk, and Sir Robert Stewart of Traquair;" and we find, from the same source, that, on the scaffold, Gowrie turned to Melvil, with a last request, as if intrusting it to his dearest friend. All this makes me suspect that Melvil only *accompanied* Arran, and did not *assist* him in entrapping Gowrie. Yet, anxious as I was to think the best, the assertion, contained in the original paper sent by Davison to Walsingham, was too clear and direct to permit me to omit it.

the government. Since that time, his life had been one continued career of public faction; his character was stained by a keen appetite for private revenge;¹ and although all must reprobate the base contrivances resorted to, to procure evidence against him on his trial, it is certain that, in common with Mar, Angus, and Glammis, he had engaged in a conspiracy to overturn the government.² It is singular to find, that a man thus marked so deeply with the features of a cruel age, should have combined with these considerable cultivation and refinement. He was a scholar, fond of the fine arts, a patron of music and architecture, and affected magnificence in his personal habits and mode of living. Common report accused him of being addicted to the occult sciences; and, on his trial, one of the articles against him was his having consulted a witch; but this he treated with deep and apparently sincere ridicule.

¹ "Quant au Compte de Gourie il ressemble toujours a luy mesme, collere et vindicatif et sur lequel peult plus la souvenance d'une injure passée, que toute aultre prevoiance de l'avenir."—Menainville to Mauvissiere, March 28, 1583. State-paper Office.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Colvile to Walsingham, May 12, 1584.

CHAP. VII.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1584—1586.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>England.</i>	<i>France.</i>	<i>Germany.</i>	<i>Spain.</i>	<i>Portugal.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>
Elizabeth.	Henry III.	Rudolph II.	Philip II.	Phillip II.	Gregory XIII. Sixtus V.

THE death of Gowrie, and the flight of his fellow-conspirators, left Arran¹ in possession of the supreme power in Scotland, and filled Elizabeth and her ministers with extreme alarm. They knew his unbounded ambition; they were aware of the influence which he possessed over the character of the young king: his former career had convinced them that his talents were quite equal to his opportunities. He combined military experience, and the promptitude and decision which a soldier of fortune so often acquires, with a genius for state affairs, and a ready eloquence, in which all could see the traces of a learned education. To this was added a noble presence and figure, with commanding manners, which awed or conciliated as he pleased those whom he employed as the tools of his greatness. Elizabeth suspected, also, and on good grounds, that although he professed a great regard for the reformed religion—declaring his fears

¹ Captain James Stewart, Earl of Arran.

least the faction of the queen-mother should regain its influence in Scotland, and seduce the mind of the young monarch from the truth—still these asseverations were rather politic than sincere. For their truth, she and her councillors had no guarantee: and looking to the profligacy of his private life, his bitter opposition to the Presbyterian clergy, and his constant craving after forfeitures and power, they conjectured that his alleged devotion to England, and desire to continue the amity, was rather a contrivance to gain time till he looked about him, than any more permanent principle of action.

All this was embarrassing to the English queen and her ministers: and there were other difficulties in the way of their recovery of influence in Scotland, to which it was impossible to shut their eyes. They had trusted that the late conspiracy, if successful, would restore Lord Arbroath and Lord Claud Hamilton to their ancient authority and estates; and that their union with the Earl of Angus, who wielded the immense power of the house of Douglas, would enable them to crush Arran, and destroy the French faction in Scotland. But Arran was now triumphant; and his enmity to the houses of Douglas and Hamilton was deep and deadly. Their restoration, he well knew, must have been his utter ruin. He had brought the Regent Morton to the scaffold; he had possessed himself of the title and estates of the unfortunate Earl of Arran; and as long as he continued in power, Elizabeth foresaw that the exiles would never be permitted to return. She had difficulties, also, with the faction of the Kirk. They had hitherto been encouraged by England; and had been employed, by Burghley and Walsingham, as powerful opponents of the French faction and the intrigues of the queen-

mother. But Elizabeth had herself no sympathies for the Presbyterian form of church government: she had often blamed the factious and Republican principles disseminated by its ministers; and now, when the party of the Kirk were no longer dominant, she felt disposed to regard them with coldness and distrust.¹ On the other hand, the young king had avowed his determined enmity to Rome; whilst his opposition was simply to Presbytery as contrasted with Episcopacy. He had formed a resolution to maintain, at all risks, against the attacks of its enemies, the Episcopal form of government which had been established in Scotland. He was assisted in this great design by Arran, a man not easily shaken in his purposes; and by Adamson archbishop of St. Andrews, whose abilities were of a high order, both as a divine and a scholar: and now that Gowrie was gone, and the other great leaders of the Kirk in exile, there was every probability that James would succeed in his object. - It became, therefore, a question with Elizabeth, whether she might not gain more by encouraging the advances of Arran, than she would lose by withdrawing her support from the exiled lords.

Such being her feelings, she resolved to be in no hurry to commit herself till she had sent a minister to Scotland, who should carefully examine the exact state of parties in that country. When the conspiracy broke out, Mr. Davison had been on his road thither; but he was arrested on his journey, at Berwick, by letters from Walsingham:² and when the French ambassador, who was resident at the English court, requested the queen's permission to repair to Scotland

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, June 17, 1584.

² Ibid. April 29, 1584.

and act as a mediator between the factions, Elizabeth readily consented.¹ She was the more inclined to choose this moderate course, as the King of France had recently offered to engage in a strict league with England. He had declared his earnest desire to see the three crowns united in perfect amity, and his wishes that the afflicted state of Scotland should be restored to quiet; whilst he had instructed his ambassador to visit the captive Queen of Scots, to exert himself to the utmost to mitigate the rigour of her confinement, and, if possible, to procure her restoration to liberty.²

In the mean time, Arran and the king, although they professed a firm resolution to maintain pacific relations with England, adopted energetic measures to secure their triumph and complete the ruin of their enemies. A parliament was held at Edinburgh,³ in which Angus, Mar, Glammis, and their numerous adherents, were declared guilty of treason, and their estates forfeited to the crown; whilst some laws were passed, which carried dismay into the hearts of the Presbyterian clergy, and amounted, as Davison declared to Walsingham, to the supplanting and overthrow of the government of the Kirk. The authority of the king was declared supreme in all causes, and over all persons. It was made treason to decline his judgment, and that of his council, in any matter whatsoever; the jurisdiction of any court, spiritual or temporal, which was not sanctioned by his highness and the three estates, was discharged; and no persons,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, May 4, 1584. Ibid. same to same, May 10, 1584.

² MS. State-paper Office, draft, Points in the French Ambassador's letter, May 13, 1584.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 23, 1584.

of whatever function or quality, were to presume, under severe penalties, to utter any slanderous speeches against the majesty of the throne, or the wisdom of the council ; or to criticise, in sermons, declamations, or private conferences, their conduct and proceedings.¹ All ecclesiastical assemblies, general or provincial, were prohibited from convening ; and the whole spiritual jurisdiction was declared to be resident in the bishops : the sentence of excommunication pronounced against Montgomery was abrogated ; and a commission granted to the Archbishop of St. Andrews, for the reformation of the university of St. Andrews, a seminary of education, which was suspected to be in great need of purification from the heterodox and Republican doctrines of its exiled principal, Melvil.² To these laws it was added, that all persons who had in their possession the History of Scotland, and the work, *De Jure Regni*, written by Buchanan, should bring them to the Secretary of state, to be revised and reformed by him.³

It had been suspected by the Kirk that such measures were in preparation ; and Mr. David Lindsay, one of the most temperate of the ministers, had been selected to carry to the king a protest against them ; but before this took place, he was seized in his own house, and carried out of bed, a prisoner, to the castle of Blackness.⁴ It was alleged that he had been engaged in secret practices with England ; and this created a presumption that he had been cognizant of the recent conspiracy of Gowrie. Such severity, however, did not intimidate his brethren ; and when the recent

¹ Spottiswood, fol. 333. MS. letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 23, 1584.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 27, 1584.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid. May 23, 1584.

acts against the Kirk were proclaimed at the Cross, on the Sunday after the rise of the parliament, Robert Pont, and Balcanquel, two of the ministers of the capital, openly protested against them. Having satisfied their conscience, and warned their flock against obedience, they deemed it proper to provide for their own safety ; and fled in the night, followed hard by some of the king's guard, who had orders to arrest them. They escaped, however, and entered Berwick by daybreak.¹

Elizabeth now ordered Davison to proceed to Scotland ; and the young king despatched the celebrated Sir James Melvil, who was then much in his confidence, to meet him on the borders. Melvil's commission was to sound the ambassador's mind before he received audience ; and after their meeting he despatched a letter to his brother, Sir Robert Melvil, in which he gave a minute and graphic account of their conversation, as they rode together towards the court. Davison he described as all smiles and gentleness, full of thanks for the noble train which had met him on the marches, and earnest in his hopes that he might prove a more happy instrument of amity than his diplomatic predecessors, Randolph and Bowes. Sir James's reply was politely worded, but significant and severe. He had little doubt, he said, that the intentions of the Queen of England were sincere ; her offers assuredly were fair, and the rebellion of subjects against their prince could not but be hateful to her ; and yet the proceedings of her councillors and ministers appeared far otherwise to clear-sighted men. As for the king his master, he was now a man both in wit and personage,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, May 27, 1584.

and acute enough to look more to deeds than words. It is the custom (continued Melvil) of some countries to hold their neighbours in civil discord, and send ambassadors to and fro to kindle the fire under colour of concord. No words could more plainly point out the recent proceedings of Elizabeth; but Sir James was too much of a courtier not to avoid the direct application. He utterly disclaimed having that opinion of her majesty, or of the ambassador himself, that many had of *some* counsellors and ambassadors; but he assured him, unless her majesty proceeded otherwise with the king than she had done yet, matters were able¹ [likely] to fall out to her unmendable discontentment. I would not speak of auld² done deeds, said he, pursuing the attack; but now lately, when Mr Walsingham was sent, his majesty was in good hope of a strait amity to be packed in respect of his own earnest inclination and the quality of him that was sent, and could find nothing but an appearance of chagement of mind in him, either upon some new occasion, or by the persuasion of some other party; and, nevertheless, his majesty dealt favourably and familiarly with him, and showed favour unto sundry that were suspected, at his request, and kept straitly some speeches that were between them; albeit afterwards Mr Bowes alleged the contrary, in such sort that sundry thought it were done to pick a quarrel. And whereas, (continued Melvil, alluding to the late conspiracy of Gowrie,) his majesty was mercifully inclined to all his subjects,—both they with some of England, and some of England with them had practised, whereof

¹ "Able" is the word in the original. There is some error, however; the sense requires "likely."

² Auld; old.

her majesty had some forewarning,—yet they drew to plain rebellion by them that came *het-fut*¹ out of England and Ireland, and were now returned and treated there again; and then you will say, the queen loves his majesty, the queen seeks his majesty's preservation! What is this but mockery?² This was a home-thrust, which Davison, who knew its truth, could not easily parry; nor was he more comfortable when Sir James alluded to the conduct of the Kirk, and the state of religion. Lord Burghley himself, said Melvil, when in Scotland at the time of the siege of Leith, had been scandalized at the proceedings of the ministers, and gave plain counsel to put order to them, or else they would subvert the whole estate; and yet now, said he, they are again crying out against the king's highness, whose life and conversation is better reformed and more godly than their own. He then detailed to him more particularly, as they rode along, the "slanderous practices of some of these busy factioners;" and ended with this advice: "Mr. Ambassador,—if the queen require friendship, she must like the king's friends; she must hate his enemies; and either deliver them into his hands, or chase them forth of her country, as she did at his majesty's mother's desire after the slaughter of Davie. Your mistress need not dread the king: he is young, far more bent on honest pastime than on great handling of countries; and, unless compelled by such doings as have been carried on lately, he will keep this mind for many years yet. He is young enough [this was a glance at the succession to Elizabeth] to abide upon any thing God has provided for him."³

¹ Het-fut; hot-foot.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Sir James Melvil to my Lord of Pittenweem, or Sir Robert Melvil of Karny.

³ Ibid.

The two friends, by this time, had reached Melvil's country seat, from which they rode to the court at Falkland, and Davison was admitted to his audience. He found the young Duke of Lennox, and the Earls of Arran, Huntley, Montrose, and other nobles, around the king, who received his letters with courtesy, but expressed himself in passionate terms against the rebellious nobles, whom, he said, he expected Elizabeth to deliver into his hands. To this Davison replied, that no one could be more tender of his estate and preservation than his mistress. As to the noblemen whom he termed rebels, she was as yet utterly ignorant of the true circumstances of the late *alteration*, (by this mild term she alluded to Gowrie's treason;) but she had always regarded these nobles as men who had hazarded their lives in his service; nor could she now deliver them, without blemish to her honour. Did his majesty forget, that he had himself blamed Morton for the delivery of Northumberland in his minority; and had recently refused to give up Holt the Jesuit, who had been concealed in Scotland, and was a notorious intriguer against her majesty's government? Besides, she had good cause of offence from the late conduct of Livingston, his servant, whom he had sent up to require the delivery of Angus and his friends. This man had spread reports injurious to her honour: he had asserted that Gowrie had written a letter in prison, accusing Elizabeth of a plot against the life both of Mary and the young king. The whole was a foul and false slander; and she knew well the strata-gems which had been used to procure such a letter; but she did, indeed, think it strange that the king himself should credit such stories of one whose life and government had been as innocent and unspotted as hers, and who had shown such care of himself, and

sisterly affection to his mother.¹ For the banished noblemen, she should take good care they should create no trouble to his kingdom.

To all this James answered, with a spirit and readiness for which Davison was not prepared, that for this last assurance there was not much necessity. He could look, he hoped, well enough himself to the defence of his kingdom against such rebels as she now thought good to protect. The case of Holt, he said, was not parallel. He was a mean and single subject: they were noblemen of great houses and alliance. For Gowrie's letter, it was true such a letter had been written; but its terms were so general, as to touch neither her majesty, nor any other persons in particular: nor was the accusation ever substantiated by proof. Her majesty's honour, therefore, was unblemished. James then turned to lighter subjects, talked of his hunting and pastimes, and handed the ambassador over to Montrose, with whom he dined.²

A few days' observation convinced Davison that James felt as deeply as he had expressed himself; and that, although Arran's power was great, the king's inclinations seconded, if they did not originate, all those severe measures which were now adopted against the banished nobles and the ministers. Nothing was heard of, from day to day, but prosecutions, arrests, forfeitures, and imprisonments; whilst Arran, and the nobles and barons who had joined his party, exultingly divided the spoil. The immense estates of the family of Douglas were eagerly sought after; and Davison, in a letter to Walsingham, conveyed a striking picture of the general scramble, "with the misery and confusion of the country. The proceedings of this court,"

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, June 10, 1584, Davison to Walsingham.

² Ibid.

said he, "are thought so extreme and intolerable, as have not only bred a common hatred and mislike of the instruments, but also a decay of the love and devotion of the subjects to his majesty. * * The want of their ministers exiled; the imprisonment of Mr. David Lindsay in the Blackness; and the warding of Mr. Andrew Hay in the north, who refused to subscribe their late acts of parliament, do not a little increase the murmur and grudging of the people; besides the lack of the ordinary ministry here, which is now only supplied by Mr. John Craig and Mr. John Brand, at such times as they may be spared from their own charges. The king is exceedingly offended with such of them as are fled, blaming them to have withdrawn themselves without cause, notwithstanding some of their friends were already in hands, and warrant given forth for their own charging and apprehending before their departure. Immediately upon their returning," he continued, "the Bishop of Glasgow, and Fintry, another excommunicate, came to this town, and were absolved, *jure politico*, from the sentence of excommunication, and now have liberty and access to the court. * * The prisoners are all yet unrelieved of their wards, save Lindsay and Mr. William Lesly, who, by the great suit of the Laird and Lady Johnston, hath obtained his life. The Bishop of Moray and George Fleck remain in Montrose. Bothwell hath been an earnest suitor for Coldingknowes; but hath yet obtained no grace: he hath gotten the grant of Cockburnspeth; Sir William Stewart hath Douglas; the Secretary Maitland, Boncle; and the Colonel, Tantallon: all belonging to Angus, whose lady doth yet retain her dowery. The Colonel hath, besides, the tutory of Glammis, with the Master's living. Huntley hath gotten Paisley and Buquhan's lands; Montrose, Bal-

manno, belonging to George Fleck; Crawford hath gotten the Abbey of Scone; Montrose the office of treasurer and the lordship of Ruthven; Arran, Dirleton, Cowsland, and Newton: all some time belonging to Gowrie, whose wife and children are very extremely dealt withal. Athole stands on terms of interdicting, for that it is suspected he will relieve and support them. Glencairn hath taken the castle of Erskine; the Laird of Clackmannan hath spoiled Alloa, both belonging to the Earl of Mar, whose living is yet undistributed, save the lordship of Brechin, which is given to Huntley. The Laird of Johnston hath gotten Locharnell, belonging to George Douglas. The living of the rest in exile being like to follow the same course. Arran," he went on to observe, "had been promoted to the high office of chancellor; Sir John Maitland had been made secretary; Sir Robert Melvil, treasurer-depute; and Lord Fleming, lord chamberlain; whilst Adamson, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, was in high favour, constantly at court, and busily occupied in his schemes for the total destruction of the Presbyterian form of church government, and in the persecution of its ministers and supporters."¹

Calm and cold as was the language of this letter, the sum of public misery and individual suffering contained in such a description must have been great and intense; and yet such scenes of proscription and havock were too common in Scotland to make any deep impression upon Elizabeth, who, when the political tools with which she worked were worn out or useless, was accustomed to cast them aside with the utmost indifference.² But her ambassador struck upon a different string, and one which instantly

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, June 10, 1584.

² Ibid.

vibrated with alarm and anger, when he assured her, that a complete revolution had taken place in the feelings of the young king towards his mother; that they kept up a constant communication; and that all the observations made by him, since his arrival in Scotland, convinced him that French politics, and the influence of the captive queen, regulated every measure at the Scottish court.¹ All pointed to this. The association, concluded already, or on the point of being concluded, between them, by which Mary was to resign the kingdom to her son; the late revolution at St. Andrews; the execution, exile, or imprisonment of such as had been constant in religion; the alteration of the Protestant magistracy in the burghs; the reception of English Jesuits into Scotland; the negotiations of the Scottish nobles now in power with the Bishops of Glasgow and Ross, Mary's ambassadors and instruments at the courts of France and Spain; the frequent intelligence between the young king and his mother; his speeches in her favour, and his impatience of hearing any thing in her dispraise: all were so many facts, to which the most cursory observer could scarcely shut his eyes; and which, to use Davison's words to Walsingham, clearly demonstrated that the Scottish queen, though elsewhere in person, sat at the stern of the government, and guided both king and nobles as she pleased.²

This was an alarming state of things to Elizabeth. The king was now grown up: his marriage could not be long delayed. If, by his mother's influence, it took place with a daughter of France; if, to the intrigues of the Spanish faction of the Roman Catholics in her own realm, were to be added the

¹ MS. letter State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, June 10, 1584.

² Ibid. May 28, 1584.

revived influence of the Guises in Scotland, and an increased power of exciting rebellion in Ireland ; what security had she for her crown, or even for her life ? A conspiracy against her person was at this moment organizing in England, for which Francis Throckmorton was afterwards executed.¹ Of its true character it is difficult to form an opinion ; but whether a real or a counterfeit plot, it was enough to alarm the country. It seems certain, that many Jesuits and seminary priests were busy in in both kingdoms, exciting the people to rebellion. Slandorous libels, and treatises on tyrannicide, were printed and scattered about by those who considered the Queen of England a usurper and a heretic : her enemies looked to the Queen of Scots as the bulwark of the true faith in England ; and Mary, impatient under her long captivity, naturally and justifiably felt disposed to encourage every scheme which promised her liberty and rest. At this moment, when all was so gloomy, the faction in Scotland by whose assistance Elizabeth had hitherto kept her opponents in check, had been suddenly overwhelmed, its leaders executed, or driven into banishment, and a government set up, the first acts of which had exhibited a complete devotedness to the friends and the interests of Mary.

The English queen was, therefore, compelled, by the imminency of the danger, to put the question, How was this crisis to be met ? Having consulted Davison, she found that any attempt at direct mediation in the favour of the banished lords, would, in the present temper of the young king, be unsuccessful ; and to use open force to create a counter-revo-

¹ Carte, vol. iii. p. 586.

lution, and restore the Protestant ascendancy, was a path full of peril.¹ Setting both these aside, however, there were still three ways which presented themselves to revive her influence, and check the headlong violence by which things were running into confusion and hostility to England. One was to secure the services of Arran, who possessed the greatest influence over James. He had secretly offered himself to Elizabeth, declared his constancy in religion as it was professed in England, and his conviction, that to preserve the amity with that realm was the best policy for his sovereign. He undertook, if the English queen followed his counsel, to keep the young king his master unmarried for three years; and he requested her to send down to the border, some nobleman of rank in whom she placed confidence, whom he would meet there, and to whom, in a private conference, he would propose such measures as should be for the lasting benefit of both countries. A second method, directly contrary to this, was to support the banished lords, Angus, Mar, and Glammis, with money and troops; to employ them to overwhelm Arran, and compel the king to restore the reformed faction, and the exiled ministers of the Kirk. A third scheme presented itself, in the offers which the captive queen herself had made at this moment to Elizabeth. She was now old, she said; ambition had no charms for her; she was too much broken in health and spirits, by her long imprisonment, to meddle with affairs of state. All that she now wished, was to be restored to liberty, and permitted to live in retirement, either in England or in her own country. She could not prevent her

¹ MS. Letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Burghley, June 23, 1584.

friends, and the great body of the Roman Catholics in Europe, from connecting her name with their efforts for the restoration of the true faith; from soliciting her approval, and organizing plans for her deliverance. All this resulted from her having been so long detained a captive against the most common principles of law and justice; but if the queen would adopt a more generous system, and restore her to liberty, she was ready, she said, to make Elizabeth a party to the association, which was now nearly completed, with her son; to resign the government into the hands of the young king; to use her whole influence in reconciling him to the exiled lords; to promote, by every method in her power, the amity with England; and not only to discourage the intrigues of the Roman Catholics against the government of her good sister, but to put her in possession of many secret particulars, known only to herself, by which she should be enabled to traverse the schemes of her enemies, and restore security to her person and government.

All these three methods presented themselves to Elizabeth, and all had their difficulties. If she accepted Arran's offer, it could hardly be done, except after the old fashion, which she so much disliked, of pensioning himself and his friends, outbidding France, and setting her face against his mortal enemies, the Douglasses and the Hamiltons, whose return must be his ruin. If she sent back the exiled lords, it equally involved her in expense, and pledged her to the support of the Kirk; to whose Presbyterian form of government, and high claims of infallibility and independence, she bore no favour. If she embraced Mary's proposals,—her safest, because her justest and most generous course,—she acted in hostility to the advice of Burgh-

ley and Walsingham, who were deemed her wisest councillors; and who had declared, in the strongest possible terms, that the freedom of the Scottish queen was inconsistent with the life of their royal mistress, or the continuance of the Protestant opinions in England. Having weighed these difficulties, Elizabeth held a conference with her confidential ministers, Lord Burghley and Walsingham. Although of one mind as to the rejection of the offers of Mary, they, contrary to what had hitherto taken place, differed in opinion on the two alternatives which remained. Burghley advised her to gain Arran, to send a minister to hold a secret conference with him on the borders,¹ and, through his influence, to manage the young king. Walsingham, on the other hand, warmly pleaded for the banished lords. No trust, he affirmed, could be put in Arran; and as long as he ruled all, there would be no peace for England: but at this instant, so great was the unpopularity of the young king and this proud minister, that if her majesty sent home the banished lords, with some support in money and soldiers, they would soon expel him from his high ground, and restore English ascendancy at the Scottish court.

Having considered these opinions, Elizabeth decided that she would exclusively follow neither, but adopt a plan of her own. It was marked by that craft and dissimulation which, in those days of crooked and narrow policy, were mistaken for wisdom. To all the three parties who had offered themselves, hopes were held out, Arran was flattered, his proposals accepted; and Lord Hunsdon, the cousin of the English queen, directed to meet him in a conference on the borders.² At the same moment, a negotiation, which had been

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Instructions to Lord Hunsdon, June 30, 1584.

² Ibid.

opened a short while before with the Queen of Scots, was renewed: she was once more deluded with the dream of liberty, and encouraged to use her influence with her son, and persuade him to more charitable feelings towards England and the exiled lords;¹ and, lastly, these noblemen, and the banished ministers of the Kirk, were fed with hopes, that the queen would restore them to their country; strengthen them with money and arms, and gratefully accept their service to overwhelm both Arran and the Scottish queen.² In this way Elizabeth persuaded herself that she could hold in her hand, and ingeniously play against each other, the main strings which moved the principal puppets of the drama. If Arran proved true to his promises, as Burghley anticipated, she could easily cast off the banished lords: if false, as Walsingham judged likely, they were ready, at her beck, to rise and overwhelm him; whilst, from the captive queen, whose restoration to liberty was never seriously contemplated, she expected to gain such disclosures as should enable her to traverse the constant intrigues of her enemies. It is to be remembered, that all these three modes of policy were carried on at one and the same time; and it is consequently difficult to bring the picture clearly, or without confusion, before the eye; but it must be attempted.

Elizabeth, in the beginning of July, informed James that she had accepted his offers, and had appointed Lord Hunsdon to hold a conference with Arran on the

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, 10th May, 1584, Walsingham to Davison. Ibid. Randolph to Davison, May 13, 1584. Ibid. Walsingham to Davison, 20th May, 1584. Ibid. Papers of Mary Queen of Scots, Lord Shrewsbury and Mr. Beal to Walsingham, May 16, 1584; and ibid. Walsingham to Lord Shrewsbury, June 16, 1584; and Ibid. Mary queen of Scots to the French ambassador, July 7, 1584.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Colville to Walsingham, 25th May, 1584.

borders.¹ The arrangements for this meeting, however, which was to be conducted with considerable pomp and solemnity, could not be completed till August; and Davison, the English ambassador in Scotland, employed this interval in getting up a faction in favour of the banished lords, in undermining the influence of Arran, and in tampering with the governor of the castle of Edinburgh, for its delivery into the hands of the queen. For all this Walsingham sent special instructions: and whilst his secret agents were busy in Scotland, Colvile had private meetings with Elizabeth, and laboured to gain the Hamiltons to join the exiled noblemen. It was hoped, in this way, that the foundation of a movement would be laid, by which, if Arran played false, a result which both Elizabeth and Walsingham expected, the banished nobles should break into Scotland, seize or assassinate the Scottish earl, get possession of the person of the king, and put an end to the French faction in that country. This, as will be seen in the sequel, actually took place, though the course of events interrupted and delayed the outbreak.²

It was now time for the appointed conference; and on the 14th of August, the Earl of Arran and Lord Hunsdon met at Foulden Kirk; a place on the borders, not far from Berwick. It was one object of the Scottish lord to impress the English with a high idea of his power; and the state with which he came was that of a sovereign rather than a subject. His retinue amounted to five thousand horse, and he was attended by five members of the privy council, who, whilst Hunsdon and he alone entered the church, waited obsequiously without in the churchyard. All,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, 2d July, 1584.

² Ibid. Colvile to Walsingham, May 25, 1584.

even the highest noblemen, appeared to treat him with such humility and deference, that Lord Hunsdon, writing to Burghley, observed, they seemed rather servants than fellow-councillors; and Sir Edward Hoby, who was also on the spot, declared he not only comported himself with a noble dignity and grace, but was, in truth, a king, binding and loosing at his pleasure.¹ In opening the conference, Arran professed the utmost devotion to the service of the English queen; and with such eloquence and earnestness, that Hunsdon declared he could not question his sincerity. There was a frankness about his communications which impressed the English lord with a conviction of their truth; and Hoby, who knew Elizabeth's love of handsome men, sent a minute portrait of him to Burghley, recommending him to the favour of his royal mistress. "For the man," said he, "surely he carrieth a princely presence and gait, goodly of personage, representing a brave countenance of a captain of middle age, very resolute, very wise and learned, and one of the best spoken men that ever I heard: a man worthy the queen's favour, if it please her."²

But to return to the conference. Hunsdon, on his side, following the instructions of Elizabeth, complained of the recent unkind conduct of James in seeking an alliance with France, and encouraging the enemies of England. It was well known, he said, to his royal mistress, that this young prince, instead of fulfilling his promises to her to whom he owed so much, was practising against her. His harbouring of Jesuits; his banishment of the noblemen best affected to Eng-

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, August 14, 1584. Ibid. Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, August 15, 1584.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, August 15, 1584.

land; his intended "association" with his mother; his intercourse with the pope; his contemptuous treatment of her ambassadors, all proved this; and would, ere now, have called down a severe retaliation, had he not recently shown a change of mind, and expressed a desire of reconciliation, which she was willing to believe sincere. She now trusted that Arran would act up to his protestations; and employ his influence with the king his master, for the restoration of amity between the two crowns, and the return of the exiled nobility.

In his reply to this, Arran did not affect to conceal the intrigues of France and Spain to gain the young king; but he assured Hunsdon that all his influence should be exerted to counteract their success, and promote the amity with England. As to Elizabeth's complaints, some he admitted to be true, some he denied, others he exculpated. His master, he said, had never dealt with any Jesuits, and knew of none in his dominions: the Scottish king had no intentions of carrying forward "the association" with his mother; nor had he any secret intrigues with the pope. Arran admitted James's severity to some of the English ambassadors; but had it not been for the reverence borne to their mistress, they would have been used with harder measure: for James had Mr. Randolph's own hand to prove him a stirrer up of sedition; and it was Mr. Bowes, her majesty's ambassador, who was the principal plotter of the seizure of the king's person at Ruthven, and the recent rebellious enterprise at Stirling. As for the banished lords, it was strange, indeed, to find her majesty an intercessor for men who had cast off their allegiance, and taken arms against their natural prince; and whose proceedings had been so outrageous, that neither the king, nor he himself,

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could entertain the idea of their return for a moment. Angus, Mar, and their companions, had never ceased to plot against the government. Let Hunsdon look back to the course of the last two years. With what shameful ingratitude had Angus treated the king his master, in the business of the Earl of Morton, in the affair of the raid of Ruthven, when they seized and imprisoned him, (Arran,) and threatened the king they would send him his head in a dish, if he did not instantly banish Lennox! Hunsdon pleaded against this the king's own letter to Elizabeth, which showed that he was pleased with the change. Arran smiled and said, it was easy to extort such a letter from a prince they had in their hands. Hunsdon replied, that James ought to have secretly sought advice from Bowes the English ambassador. Bowes! retorted Arran: Bowes, as the king well knew, was at the bottom of the whole conspiracy for his apprehension. And then, look to the dealings of the same lords in the last affair, which cost Gowrie his head. With what craft did they seduce the ministers; plotting my death, and the king's second apprehension, had it not been happily detected and defeated. Nay, said he, getting warmer as he proceeded, what will your lordship think, if I tell you, that at this moment the men you are pleading for as penitent exiles, are as active and cruel-minded in their captivity as ever; and that, at this instant, I have in my hands the certain proofs of a plot now going forward, to seize the king, to assassinate myself, to procure by treachery the castle of Edinburgh, and to overturn the government?¹ 'Tis but a few days since all this has been discovered; and can

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Walsingham, Aug. 14, 1584; and MS. notes of the same interview, endorsed by Burghley, Aug. 13, 1584. Also, *ibid.* Hunsdon to Burghley, August 14, 1584.

your lordship advise your mistress to intercede for such traitors?

This was too powerful an appeal to be resisted; and Hunsdon, changing the subject, spoke of the conspiracies against Elizabeth. Adverting to Throckmorton's recent treason, he declared that his mistress the queen well knew that, at this moment, there were practices carrying on in the heart of her kingdom for the disturbance of her government. She knew, also, that the King of Scots and his mother were privy to these; nay, she knew that it was intended he should be a principal actor therein. Let him disclose them all fully and frankly, and he should find that the English queen knew how to be grateful. To this, Arran promptly answered, that nothing should be hid from Elizabeth, and no effort omitted by the king or himself to satisfy her majesty on this point. He then showed Hunsdon his commission under the great seal, giving him the broadest and most unlimited powers; and the conference, which had lasted for five hours, was brought to an end.¹ On coming out of the church, both Hunsdon and he appeared in the highest spirits and good humour. It was evident to the lords, who had waited without, that their solitary communications had been of an agreeable nature; and the Scottish earl seemed resolved that his own people should remark it; for, turning to the lords about him, he said aloud, "Is it not strange to see two men, accounted so violent and furious as we two are, agree so well together,—I hope, to the contentment of both crowns and their peace?"² At this moment, Hunsdon and

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Walsingham, August 14, 1584; *ibid.* same date, Hunsdon to Burghley.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Dr. Parry, August 15, 1584.

Arran were reckoned the proudest and most passionate noblemen in their two countries; but for this excessive cordiality there were secret reasons, if we may believe an insinuation of Walsingham's to Davison. Hunsdon and Lord Burghley had a little plot of their own to secure the favour of the young King of Scots, by gaining Arran, and bringing about a marriage between James and a niece of the English earl; who, as consin to Elizabeth, considered his kin as of royal blood.¹ On this point, Walsingham felt so bitterly, that he accused his old friends of worshipping the rising sun; and observed, that her majesty had need now to make much of faithful servants.²

On coming out of the church, Arran called for the Master of Gray, a young nobleman of his suite, and introduced him to Hunsdon. It was impossible not to be struck with the handsome countenance and graceful manners of this youth. He had spent some time at the court of France; and, having been bred up in the Roman Catholic faith, had been courted by the house of Guise, and employed by them as a confidential envoy in their negotiations with the captive Queen of Scots. He had always professed the deepest attachment to this unhappy princess; and the young king had, within the last year, become so captivated with his society, that Mary, who had too rapidly trusted him with much of her secret correspondence, sanguinely hoped that his influence would be of the highest service to her, in regaining a hold over the affections of her son. But Gray, under an exterior which was pre-eminently beautiful, though too feminine to please some

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, October 1, 1584. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Burghley, July 27, 1584.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, July 12, 1584.

tastes, carried a heart as black and treacherous as any in this profligate age ; and, instead of advocating, was prepared to betray the cause of the imprisoned queen. To her son the young king, and the Earl of Arran, he had already revealed all he knew ; and he now presented a letter from James his master to Hunsdon. Its contents were of a secret and confidential kind, and related to the conspiracies against Elizabeth, which gave this princess such perpetual disquiet. After enjoining on Hunsdon the strictest concealment of all he was about to communicate from every living being, except his royal mistress, Gray informed him that the King of Scots meant to send him speedily as ambassador to England, with some public and open message to Elizabeth ; under colour of which, he was to be intrusted with the commission of disclosing all the secret practices of Mary. Had Hunsdon kept his promise, we should have known nothing of all this ; but next morning he communicated it to Burghley, in a letter meant only for his private eye. It is to the preservation of this letter, that we owe our knowledge of a transaction which brings the young king, and his favourite the Master of Gray, before us in the degrading light of informers : the one betraying his mother ; the other selling, for his own gain, the secrets with which he had been intrusted by his sovereign. This is so dark an accusation, that I must substantiate it by an extract from the letter in question. “ Now, my lord,” said Hunsdon, addressing Burghley, “ for the principal point of such conspiracies as are in hand against her majesty, I am only to make her majesty acquainted withal by what means she shall know it—yet will I acquaint your lordship with all. The king did send the Master of Gray, at this meeting, to me, with a letter of commendation, under the king’s own hand,

whom he means presently to send to her majesty, as though it were for some other matters: but it is he that must discover all these practices, as one better acquainted with them than either the king or the earl, (but by him.¹) He is very young, but wise and secret, as Arran doth assure me. He is, no doubt, very inward with the Scottish queen, and all her affairs, both in England and France; yea, and with the pope, for he is accounted a Papist; but for his religion, your lordship will judge when you see him; but her majesty must use him as Arran will prescribe unto her; and so shall she reap profit by him. * * * I have written to Mr. Secretary [Walsingham] for a safe-conduct to him; but nothing of the cause of his coming, but only to her majesty and to your lordship. If Mr. Secretary be slow for this safe-conduct, I pray your lordship further it, for the matter requires no delay.”²

The conference was now concluded, and Arran had succeeded in persuading Lord Hunsdon, not only of his sincerity and devotion to the service of Elizabeth, but of his entire hold over the mind of his royal master. If Lord Burghley, to whom he professed the utmost attachment, would co-operate firmly with himself and Hunsdon, and the Master of Gray, he was able, he affirmed, to hold the young king entirely at the devotion of the Queen of England. He did not despair to unite the two crowns in an indissoluble league; and, by exposing the practices of her enemies, to enable Elizabeth to traverse all the plots of Mary and the Roman Catholics. But there were two parties whom, he declared, they must put down at all risks: the one laboured for the liberty of the captive

¹ These words seem superfluous, yet they are in the original letter.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Hunsdon to Burghley, Aug. 14, 1584.

queen, and her association in the government with her son: the other was, at this moment, intriguing in every way for the return of Angus and the exiled lords; for the triumph of the Kirk over Episcopacy, and the re-establishment of the Republican principles which had led to the raid of Ruthven, and the other conspiracies for seizing the king, and using him as their tool. The first party was supported by France, Spain, and the Spanish faction of the Roman Catholics in England: its agents on the continent were the Bishops of Ross and Glasgow, whose emissaries, the Jesuits and seminary priests, were at that moment plotting in Scotland; it possessed many friends in the privy council and nobility of Scotland,—such as, Maitland the chancellor, Sir James and Sir Robert Melvil,¹ the Earl of Huntley, and it might, indeed, be said, the whole body of the Roman Catholic peers in both countries. It was from this party that the late conspiracies against the Queen of England had proceeded, as her majesty would soon discover by the embassy of the Master of Gray; and if she listened to his (Arran's) advice, it would be no difficult matter to detach James for ever from his mother and her friends. But to effect this, she must put down the other faction of the banished lords. The king, he said, hated Angus, their leader; and Angus and the whole house of Douglas were still boiling in their hearts to revenge on their sovereign, and on Arran, the death of the Regent Morton. As to the banished lords of the house of Hamilton, their return must be his (Arran's) destruction; and for the exiled ministers of the Kirk, James was so incensed against them, and so bent upon the establishment of Episcopacy, that

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Hunsdon, August 12, 1584.

he would listen to no measures connected with their restoration. Yet this party for the return of the banished lords, was supported by Walsingham in England, and Davison her majesty's ambassador in Scotland; and their busy agent, Colvile, was admitted to secret audiences with Elizabeth, and fed with hopes of their return. If this policy were continued, (so argued Arran,) it would blast all his efforts for the binding his young master to the service of Elizabeth; for rather than one of the banished lords should set his foot in Scotland, James, he was assured, would throw himself into the arms of France and Spain, and carry through the project of an association with his mother the captive queen.

These arguments of Arran explain that jealousy and irritation which appeared in many of Secretary Walsingham's letters regarding the conference between him and Hunsdon. This crafty statesman was well aware that there was a conference within a conference, to which he was kept a stranger; a secret negotiation between Burghley and Hunsdon, the exact object of which he could not fathom; but by which he felt his own policy regarding Scotland shackled and defeated. He looked, therefore, with suspicion upon Burghley's whole conduct in the affairs of Scotland at this time; and these feelings were increased by the court which Arran had paid to Burghley's nephew, Sir Edward Hoby, who formed one of Hunsdon's suite at the conference.

This accomplished person, on the conclusion of the conference, rode from Foulden Kirk, with the Earl of Arran, to the ground where he had left his troops; the distance was three miles; they had ample time for secret talk; and Hoby next morning described the conversation, in letters addressed both to his

uncle Burghley, and his kinsman Dr. Parry.¹ The Scottish earl was particularly flattering and confidential. Bringing Hoby near his troops, which were admirably mounted and accoutred, he pointed to them significantly, and shaking his head, told him, in these ranks there were many principal leaders, who would gladly send him out of the world if they could, so mortally did they hate him; but he feared them not. Nay, such was his power, and his enemies' weakness at this moment, that if Elizabeth would accept his offers, she should have twenty thousand men at her service. To devote himself to her, indeed, would be his highest pride. As for France and Spain, he cared little for either: he neither needed their friendship, nor feared their enmity; but with the favour of his royal master, could live in Scotland independent of both; and for these conspiracies against his life, the same God who had defended him in Muscovy, Sweden, and Germany, would cast his shield over him at home. Arran then appears to have changed the subject to James's expectations as Elizabeth's successor, the state of England, the rival interests of the Catholic and Protestant factions in reference to this delicate point, and the probable effects of Mary's intrigues for the recovery of her liberty upon the prospects of her son. So, at least, may be conjectured, from Hoby's description of the great and weighty discourses into which he entered; and he ended by assuring him, that the King of Scots desired, of all things in the world, to place himself, and his whole interests, in the hands of Lord Burghley and Lord Hunsdon, the one as the wisest head, and the other the boldest heart, in

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Dr. Parry, August 15, 1584.

England.¹ When it is recollected that Arran was no friend of the Queen of Scots, and that Burghley was not only opposed to every scheme for her liberty, but had often repeated his conviction, that her life was inconsistent with Elizabeth's security, we require no more certain evidence of the melancholy fact, that James was ready, at this instant, to desert her cause, and betray her designs to her bitterest enemies.

On his return from this conference to the capital, Arran, presuming on its successful issue, resumed the management of affairs with a high and proud hand. A few days before he met Hunsdon, he had, as we have just seen, discovered a conspiracy against the government. In this plot, the captain of the castle of Edinburgh had been detected tampering with Davison and Walsingham, for the delivery of the fortress into the hands of the English faction; and Arran wisely resolved to defeat all recurrence of such attempts, by taking possession of the place in person.² He accordingly removed the governor and officers, substituted his own creatures in their room, demanded the keys of the crown jewels and wardrobe from Sir Robert Melvil, and, with his lady and household, occupied the royal apartments within the castle.³ He had now four of the strongest fortresses of the country at his devotion—Dunbarton, Stirling, Blackness, and Edinburgh; and his ambition enlarging by what it fed on, he assumed a kingly consequence and state which offended the ancient nobility, and excited their fear and envy. On his return from the conference at Foulden Kirk, he was welcomed with cannon

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Sir Edward Hoby to Lord Burghley, August 15, 1584.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Davison, July 12, 1584; and *ibid.* Walsingham to Davison, August 13, 1584.

³ MS. State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, August 16, 1584.

by the castle; a ceremony, as it was remarked, never used but in time of parliament, and to the king or regents: and when, soon after, summonses were issued for the meeting of the three estates, all the country looked forward with alarm to a renewal of the proscriptions and plunder which had already commenced against the exiled lords. But the reality even outran their anticipation. Arran, assisted by his lady, a woman whose pride and insolence exceeded his own, domineered over the deliberations of parliament; and, to the scandal of all, insisted on those acts, which they had previously prepared, being passed at once without reasoning.¹ Sixty persons were forfeited,² many were driven to purchase pardons at a high ransom, and the unhappy Countess of Gowrie was treated with a cruelty and brutality which excited the utmost commiseration in all who witnessed it. This lady, a daughter of Henry Stewart lord Methven, on the last day of the parliament, had obtained admission to an antechamber, where, as the king passed, she hoped to have an opportunity of pleading for herself and her children; but, by Arran's orders, she was driven into the open street. Here she patiently awaited the king's return, and cast herself, in an agony of tears, at his feet, attempting to clasp his knees; but Arran, who walked at James's hand, hastily pulled him past, and pushing the miserable suppliant aside, not only threw her down, but brutally trode upon her as the cavalcade moved forward, leaving her in a faint on the pavement. Can we wonder that the sons of this injured woman, bred up in the recollection of wrongs like these, should, in

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, August 24, 1584.

² Ibid. August 16, 1584.

later years, have cherished in their hearts the deepest appetite for revenge?

Immediately after the parliament, the king repaired to his palace at Falkland; whilst Arran, Montrose, and the other lords of his party, now all-powerful, remained in Edinburgh, engaged in pressing on the execution of the late acts, for the confiscation and ruin of their opponents. Of these, by far the most formidable was the Earl of Angus; who, although banished, and now at Newcastle, retained a great influence in Scotland. He was the head of the Presbyterian faction in that country, the great support of the exiled ministers; and it was his authority with Walsingham that traversed Arran's and James's schemes for a league between England and Scotland, on the broad basis of the establishment of Episcopacy. It was resolved, therefore, to cut off this baron; and Arran, and his colleague Montrose, the head of the powerful house of Graham, made no scruple of looking out for some desperate retainer, or hired villain, to whom they might commit the task. Nor, in these dark times, was such a search likely to prove either long or difficult. They accordingly soon pitched upon Jock, or John Graham of Peartree, whom Montrose knew to have a blood feud with Angus; sent a little page called Mouse to bring the borderer to Edinburgh; feasted and caressed him during the time of the parliament, and carried him afterwards to Falkland, where the two earls, and the king, proposed to him not only to assassinate their hated enemy, but to make away with Mar and Cambuskenneth, his brother exiles, at the same time. Jock at once agreed to murder Angus, and was promised a high reward by the young monarch; but he declined having any thing to do with Mar, or Cambuskenneth,

with whom he had no quarrel; and he left the palace, after receiving from Montrose a short matchlock, or riding-piece, which was deemed serviceable for the purpose in hand. But this atrocious design was not destined to succeed. The villain, who was probably lurking about in the neighbourhood of Newcastle, was detected and seized, carried before Lord Scrope, compelled to confess his intention; and information of the whole plot was immediately transmitted by Scrope to Walsingham.¹ The English secretary recommended, that the discovery should be kept a secret from all, except Angus and Mar, who were privately warned of the practices against them; and it is from the confession of the borderer himself, which he made before Scrope, that these particulars are given. The intended assassin thus described his interview with the king: After stating that he had arrived late at night at the palace, they brought him, he said, into the king's gallery, where he (the king) was alone by himself: and only he, Montrose, and Arran, and this examinant, being together, the king himself did move him, as the other two had done, for the killing of Angus, Mar, and Cambuskenneth: to whom he answered, that, for Mar and Cambuskenneth, he would not meddle with them; but for Angus, he would well be contented to do that, so as the king would well reward him for that. And the king said, he would presently give him sixty French crowns, and twenty Scottish pound land to him and his for ever, lying in Strathern, near Montrose.²

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. December 22, 1584, Scrope to Walsingham. "For the matter of Peartree, I have kept the same secret, saving to the Earls of Angus and Mar, who, I trust, will use it as the same behoveth."

² MS. Calderwood, British Museum, 1468, Examination of Jock Graham of Peartree, taken before the Lord Scrope, Warden of the West Marches, at Carlisle, November 25, 1584,

These facts are so distinctly and minutely recorded in the manuscript history of Calderwood, who has given the whole of Graham's declaration, that it was impossible to omit them; but although there is little doubt of the truth of the intended murder, so far as Arran and Montrose are concerned, it would be, perhaps, unfair to believe in the full implication of the young king, on the single evidence of this border assassin. To return, however, from this digression to Arran's headlong career. His hand, which had recently fallen so heavily on the nobility, was now lifted against the Kirk. Proclamation was made that all ministers should give up the rental of their benefices; and that none should receive stipend but such as had subscribed the new-framed policy, by which Presbytery was abrogated and Episcopacy established. As was to be expected, many of the clergy resisted, and were commanded to quit the country within twenty days; nor were they permitted, as before, to take refuge with their banished brethren in England or Ireland.¹ All this was carried through at the instigation of the primate, Archbishop Adamson, who had recently returned from England, and exerted himself to purify the universities from the leaven of Presbyterian doctrine, and to fill the vacant pulpits with ministers attached to the new form of policy. His efforts, however, met with bitter opposition. At St. Andrews, the archiepiscopal palace in which Adamson resided, was surrounded by troops of students, who armed themselves with harquebusses, and paraded round the walls, bidding the primate remember how fatal that see had been to his predecessor, and look for no better issue. Montgomery the Bishop of Glasgow was at-

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, August 16, 1584.

tacked in the streets of Ayr by a mob of women and boys, who with difficulty were restrained from stoning him, and kept pouring out the vilest abuse, calling him atheist dog, schismatic excommunicate beast, unworthy to breathe or bear life.¹ Some of the ministers, also, refusing to imitate the example of their brethren who had fled from their flocks, remained to brave the resentment of the court; and taking their lives in their hands, openly preached against the late acts, and declared their resolution not to obey them. The anathema of one of these, named Mr. John Hewison, minister of Cambuslang, has been preserved. It is more remarkable, certainly, for its courage than its charity; and may be taken as an example of the tone of the high Puritan faction to which he belonged. Preaching in the Blackfriars at Edinburgh, on the text which declares the resolute answer of St. Peter and St. Paul to the council of the Pharisees, he passed from the general application to the trials of the Kirk at that moment, and broke out into these words:—"But what shall we say? There is injunction now given by ane² wicked and godless council, to stop the mouths of the ministers from teaching of the truth; and sic³ a godless order made, as the like was never seen before. These is ane heid⁴ of the Kirk made; there being nae⁵ heid but Jesus Christ, nor cannot be. Stinking and baggage heidis!⁶ an excommunicated sanger!⁷ an excommunicate willane,⁸ wha sall never be obeyed here! We will acknowledge nae prince, nae magistrate, in teaching of the Word; nor be bounden to nae injunctions, nor obey nae acts of parliament, nor

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, August 16, 1584. ² Ane, one. ³ Sic, such. ⁴ Heid, head.

⁵ Nae, no.

⁶ Heidis, heads.

⁷ Sanger, singer.

⁸ Willane, villain.

nae other thing that is repugnant to the Word of God : but will do as Peter and John said, Better obey God nor man. But it is not the king that does this. It is the wicked, godless, and villane council he has, and other godless persons, that inform his majesty wrangously,¹ whereof there is aneugh² about him. For my own part," he continued, warming in his subject with the thoughts of persecution, "I ken³ I will be noted. I regard not. What can the king get of me but my head and my blood? I sall never obey their injunctions; like as I request all faithful folk to do the like."⁴ The prediction of this bold minister was so far verified, that he was apprehended, and order given to bring him to justice; but, for some reason not easily discovered, the trial did not take place.⁵

It was at this same time that Mr. David Lindsay, one of the persecuted ministers, whose mind, in the solitude of his prison at Blackness, had been worked into a state of feverish enthusiasm, was reported to have seen an extraordinary vision. Suddenly, in the firmament, there appeared a figure in the likeness of a man; of glorious shape and surpassing brightness; the sun was above his head, the moon beneath his feet; and he seemed to stand in the midst of the stars. As the captive gazed, an angel alighted at the feet of this transcendant being, bearing in his right hand a red naked sword, and in his left a scroll, to whom the glorious shape seemed to give commandment; upon which the avenging angel, for so he now appeared to be, flew rapidly through the heavens, and lighted on the ramparts of a fortress, which Lindsay

¹ Wrangously, wrongfully.

² Aneugh, enough.

³ Ken, know.

⁴ MS. State-paper Office, original, Accusation of Mr. John Hewison.

⁵ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, July 14, 1584.

recognised as the castle of Edinburgh. Before its gate stood the Earl of Arran and his flagitious consort, the earl gazing in horror on the destroying minister, who waved his sword above his head, his countess smiling in derision, and mocking his fears. The scene then changed: the captive was carried to an eminence, from which he looked down upon the land, with its wide fields, its cities and palaces. Suddenly the same terrible visitant appeared: a cry of lamentation arose from its inhabitants; fire fell from heaven on its devoted towns, the sword did its work, the rivers ran with blood, and the fields were covered with the dead. It was a fearful sight; but, amidst its horrors, a little bell was heard; and within a church which had stood uninjured, even in the flames, a remnant of the faithful assembled, to whom the angel uttered these words of awful admonition — “*Metuant Justi. Iniquitatem fugite. Deligite Justitiam et Judicium; aut cito revertar et posteriora erunt pejora prioribus.*”¹ Lindsay asserted that it was impossible for him to ascertain whether this scene, which seemed to shadow out the persecutions and prospects of the Kirk, was a dream or a vision; but it brought to his mind, he said, a prophecy of Knox, who, not long before his death, had predicted great peril to the faithful in the eighteenth year of the reign of James.

Elizabeth now recalled Davison from Scotland,² and looked anxiously for James’s promised ambassador, the Master of Gray, whose mission had, as she thought, been somewhat suspiciously delayed. But

¹ Sir George Warrender, MS. vol. B. fol. 59. “A vision [which] appeared to Mr. David Lindsay, he being in his bed in the house of Blackness, in the month of October, 1584.”

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Davison to Walsingham, Sept. 17, 1584.

this gave her the less anxiety, as she had, in the meantime, continued her correspondence with the banished lords, whom, at any moment, she was ready to let loose against Arran and the king.¹ She, at the same time, resumed her negotiations with Mary; and this unfortunate princess, who had so often been deluded with hopes, which withered in the expected moment of accomplishment, was, at last, induced to believe that the blessed period of freedom had arrived. Even Walsingham declared himself pleased with her offers, and advised his royal mistress to be satisfied with them.² Such was the crisis seized by the accomplished villany of the Master of Gray, to betray his royal mistress, and to enter the service of Elizabeth. Before he threw off the mask, he had the effrontery to write to Mary, affecting the highest indignation at the suspicions she had expressed of his fidelity; and declaring, that the best mode to serve her interests was that which he was now following. It was necessary, he said, that the young king, her son, should, in the first instance, treat solely for himself with Elizabeth, and abandon all thoughts of "the association" with his mother. This, he affirmed, would disarm suspicion; and James, having gained the confidence of the English queen, might be able to negotiate for her liberty. But Mary, who was already aware of Gray's treachery, from the representations of Fontenay the French ambassador, promptly and indignantly answered, that any one who proposed such a separation between her interests and those of her son, or who opposed "the association," which was almost concluded, must be her enemy, and in that light she

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Captain Reid, Sept. 23, 1584.

² Sadler Papers by Scott, vol. ii.

would regard him. To this Gray returned an angry answer, and instantly set off for England.¹

At Berwick, he had a private consultation with Hunsdon, whose heart he gained by his sanctimonious deportment in the English church, and by the frankness with which he communicated his instructions. His principal object, he declared, was to insist, that the banished lords should either be delivered up by Elizabeth, or dismissed from her dominions. If this were done, or if the queen were ready to pledge her word that it should be done, he was prepared, he said, to disclose all he knew of the secret plots against her person and government; and he would pledge himself, that no practice had been undertaken, for the last five years, against herself, or her estate, by France, Spain, the Scottish queen, or the pope, but she should know it, and how to avoid it.² Gray had been expressly ordered by James to hold his confidential communications with Burghley alone, and to repose no trust in Walsingham, whom the young king regarded as his enemy. From Arran he had received the same injunctions; and nothing could exceed the confidence which both monarch and minister seemed disposed to place in Cecil. The king paid court to him in a long pedantic letter, written wholly in his own hand; in which he discoursed learnedly upon Alexander the Great and Homer; modestly disclaiming any parallel between himself and the conqueror of Darius, but exalting Cecil far above such "a blind, begging fellow" as the Grecian bard. He addressed him as his friend and cousin, and assured him, that he considered himself infinitely fortunate in being permitted to confide

¹ Papers of Master of Gray, Bannatyne Club, pp. 30-37.

² Hunsdon to Burghley, October 19, 1584, Papers of Master of Gray, p. 13.

his most secret affairs to such a counsellor ; to whom, he was convinced, he already owed all the prosperity which hitherto had attended him.¹ Arran, at the same time, wrote in the most flattering and confidential terms to Sir Edward Hoby, Burghley's nephew ; and Hunsdon was requested by James to repair from Berwick to the English court, that he might assist in their consultations.²

Gray now proceeded to London, and was speedily admitted to an audience of Elizabeth. It may be necessary, for a moment, to attend to the exact attitude and circumstances in which this princess now stood. She had the party of the banished lords, now in England, at her command. Angus, Mar, Lord Arbroath the head of the house of Hamilton, Glamis, and many other powerful barons, were in constant communication with Walsingham ; their vassals on the alert ; the exiled ministers of the Kirk eager to join and march along with them : they held themselves ready at her beck ; and she had only to give the signal for them to cross the border and attack Arran, to have it instantly obeyed. On the side of Mary, this poor captive had been drawn on, by the prospect of freedom, to offer the sacrifice of every thing which belonged to her as an independent princess, and which she could give up with honour. By the long contemplated " association " with her son, she had agreed to resign the government into his hands, and to renounce for ever all connexion with public affairs, were she only allowed to live in freedom, with the exercise of her religion. Here, then, the Queen of England had only to consent, and,

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, James to Burghley, October 14, 1584.

² Ibid.

in the opinion of even the suspicious Walsingham, she was safe.

Such was the state of things, when the Master of Gray made his proposals from a third party,—the young king and Arran. From his intimate knowledge of the most secret transactions of the Scottish queen and the Catholic faction, he was possessed, as he affirmed, of information which vitally touched her majesty's person and estate.¹ This he was ready to reveal, but on condition that she would deliver up the banished lords, or drive them out of her dominions, break off all treaty with Mary on the subject of the association, and advance a large sum of money, in the shape of an annual proof of her affection to the young king. The first was absolutely necessary; for the king his master was animated with the strongest hatred of his rebels. The second was equally so; for Mary's liberty was inconsistent with the security of both the Queen of England and James; her unshaken attachment to the Roman Catholic faith rendering any "association" with her son highly dangerous to Elizabeth; whose efforts ought to be directed to separate their interests, and to secure the establishment of a government in Scotland under a minister opposed to Mary. And here Gray artfully laid the foundation of his own rise with Elizabeth, and of Arran's disgrace. Arran, he insinuated, was not so deeply devoted to her majesty, or so hostile to the Scottish queen, as he pretended. He was proud, capricious, tyrannical, and completely venal. The king, too, was in such need of money, that Elizabeth would do well to remember that his politics, at this time, depended on the supply of his purse. If France bid highest, France would

¹ Papers of the Master of Gray, p. 13, Hunsdon to Burghley, Oct. 19, 1584.

have both the minister and his master. Arran, too, by his pride and extortions, was daily, almost hourly, raising up a formidable party against himself. None, he said, dared to aspire to any interest with the king, whom he did not attack and attempt to ruin. Already he, the Master of Gray, was the object of his jealousy and hatred, for the favour with which the king regarded him. All was yet, indeed, smooth and smiling between them ; but he knew well, this very embassy had been given him with the view of separating him from his master. The storm was brewing ; but if Arran tried to wreck him, as he had done so many others, he might chance, proud as he was, to have a fall himself. So confident did he feel, he said, in the love of his royal master, that, if Elizabeth would grant him her support, he was certain he could supplant this insolent favourite, gain the young king, unite England and Scotland in an indissoluble league, recall the banished lords, overwhelm all the secret plots of the Roman Catholics, and completely separate Mary and her son. To effect all this, however, would require time ; for, on two points, the king would be hard to be moved. If the exiles came back, they would bring Andrew Melvil and the banished ministers of the Kirk along with them ; and, at this moment, the very mention of such a result would excite James's determined opposition.

Elizabeth was highly pleased with this proposal. She had long distrusted Arran, and felt that her best security lay in the return of the Protestant lords : she was anxious to break off her negotiation with Mary, but did not like the odium of such a course ; the blame would be thrown on the King of Scots by Gray's plan, and this she liked much. She knew the unremitting efforts of France and Spain to gain the young king ; and felt assured, that her only safeguard

would be an "association" between her own kingdom and Scotland, from which Mary should be entirely excluded; and the basis of which should be the defence of the reformed religion against the perpetual attacks of the Roman Catholics in Europe.

There were some circumstances of recent occurrence which greatly strengthened her in this course. Father Crichton, a Jesuit, happening to be on his voyage to Scotland from Flanders, the vessel was chased by pirates, and he was observed to tear some papers and cast them away; but the wind blew them back into the ship: they were picked up, put together, and found to contain a proposal for an invasion of England by Spain and the Duke of Guise. As one object proposed here, and in all such plots, was the delivery of the Queen of Scots and the dethronement of Elizabeth, their constant recurrence was now met by an "association" for the protection of the English queen's government and life, first proposed by Leicester, and eagerly subscribed by persons of all ranks and denominations. The terms of this association were afterwards solemnly approved by parliament, and an act passed for the safety of the queen's person. It stated, that if any invasion or rebellion should be made in her dominions, or any enterprise attempted against her person, by *or for* any person pretending a title to the crown after her death, she might, by a commission under the great seal, constitute a court for the trial of such offences, and which should have authority to pass sentence upon them. It added, that a judgment of "guilty" having been pronounced, it should immediately be made public; and that all persons against whom such sentence was passed, should be excluded from all claim to the crown, and be liable to be prosecuted to the death, with their aiders and abettors,

by her majesty's subjects.¹ This league was evidently most unjust towards the Scottish queen, as it made her responsible, and liable to punishment, for the actions of persons over whom she had no control. She saw this; and at once declared that "the association" had no other object than indirectly to compass her ruin. But if alarming to Mary, it was proportionably gratifying to Elizabeth. She persuaded herself, that, if her subjects thus united to protect her person, and preserve the reformed faith, she ought vigorously to second their efforts; and this inclined her to look graciously on Gray. The measures, therefore, proposed by him were adopted. It was resolved to undermine Arran, as the first step for the restoration of the banished lords; and the other objects, it was trusted, would follow. To co-operate with Gray, Sir Edward Wotton was chosen to succeed Davison as ambassador in Scotland. He was a man of brilliant wit and insinuating address, a great sportsman, an adept in hunting and "wood-craft;" and these qualities, with a present of eight couple of the best hounds, and some choice horses, would, it was believed, entirely gain the heart of the young king. Wotton, too, as we learn from Sir James Melvil, was a deep plotter, and capable of the darkest designs, whilst to the world he seemed but an elegant, light-hearted, and thoughtless man of fashion.

Having laid these schemes for the ruin of his captive sovereign and of Arran his friend, the Master of Gray returned to the Scottish court, and received the thanks of the king, and his still all-powerful favourite, for the success with which he had conducted his negotiations.² To disarm suspicion, it was judged

¹ Carte, vol. iii. p. 587.

² MS. letter, Master of Gray to Elizabeth, January 24, 1584-5.

prudent that, for some time, all should go on serenely. Elizabeth wrote in flattering terms to Arran. She, at the same time, commanded the banished lords to remove from Newcastle into the interior;¹ and, in return for this, Gray had the satisfaction of assuring her, that he found the king his master in so loving a disposition towards her, that he could not feel more warmly were he her natural son. He was equally successful in at once creating a breach between Mary and James. The just and merited contempt with which Fontenay the French ambassador had stigmatized Gray's base desertion of that princess, furnished him with a subject of complaint to the king and council; and he so artfully represented the dangerous consequences which must follow "an association" between the young king and his mother, that it was unanimously resolved it should never take place.²

This was a great point gained; and to secure further success, he implored Elizabeth and her ministers to humour James for the present, by entirely casting off Angus and the exiled lords, whose despair was great when they found the predicament in which they stood. They appealed in urgent terms to Walsingham; declared that, even now, if the queen would say the word, they would break across the border, surprise the person of the king, and chase Arran with ignominy from the country. Every thing was ready for such an effort, and their friends only waited their arrival. But their proposal for an irruption was coldly received. Walsingham wrote to them, that

Ibid. Colvile to Walsingham, December 31, 1584. Also, Papers of Master of Gray, p. 41, Master of Gray to Walsingham, January 24, 1584-5.

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Colvile to Walsingham, December 31, 1584.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Master of Gray, under the title of *Le Lievreau*, to Elizabeth.

her majesty, seeing the hard success of the late enterprise at Stirling, was doubtful some like plot might have like issue; and preferred a more temperate system of mediation, in Scottish affairs, to a more violent course.¹ The exiles, therefore, submitted; and James and Arran, exulting in their success, recommenced their persecution of the Kirk.

All ministers were compelled, on penalty of deprivation, to subscribe the acts of parliament which established the Episcopal form of government; forbidden to hold the slightest intercourse with their brethren who had fled for conscience' sake; and even prosecuted, if they dared to pray for them.² This extreme severity appears to have been followed by a very general submission to the obnoxious acts; and as it was followed up by the removal of the banished lords into the interior of England, and a prohibition of any Scottish minister from preaching, publicly or privately, in that realm, the cause was considered at the lowest ebb. A letter, written at this time by David Hume, one of the exiles, from Berwick, to Mr. James Carmichael, a recusant brother of the Kirk, gave some details which carried sorrow to the hearts of the brave little remnant which still stood out against the court. It told, in homely but expressive phrase, that all the ministers betwixt Stirling and Berwick, all Lothian, and all the Merse, had subscribed, with only ten exceptions; amongst whom, the most noted were Patrick Simpson and Robert Pont; that the Laird of Dun, the most venerable champion of the Kirk, had so far receded from his primitive faith as to have become a pest to the ministry in the north; that John Durie, who had so long resisted, had

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Walsingham to Colvile, January 10, 1584-5.

² Spottiswood, p. 336.

*“ cracked his curple ”*¹ at last, and closed his mouth ; that John Craig, so long the coadjutor of Knox, and John Brande, his colleague, had submitted ; that the pulpits in Edinburgh were nearly silent — so fearful had been the defection — except, said he, a very few, who sigh and sob under the cross. His own estates, he added, had been forfeited, his wife and children beggared ; and yet he might be grateful he was alive, though in exile, for at home terror occupied all hearts. No man, said he in conclusion, while he lieth down, is sure of his life till day.²

This miserable picture was increased in its horrors by the violent proceedings of Arran against all connected with the banished lords, by his open contempt of the laws, and the shameful venality of his government. His pride, his avarice, his insolence to the ancient nobility, and impatience of all who rivalled him in the king's affections, made his government intolerable ; and the Master of Gray, beginning to find that he was looked upon with suspicion by this daring man, concluded that the moment had come for the mortal struggle between them.

At this time, Sir Edward Wotton, the English ambassador, arrived in Edinburgh. He was instructed to congratulate James on his wise determination to break off “ the association ” with his mother the captive queen, and to encourage him to enter into a firm league with England. The ambassador was also directed by Elizabeth to hold out to the Scottish king good hopes of a pension ; but Walsingham, her prudent secretary, advised him not rashly to name

¹ “ Cracked his curple.” Curple, Scots ; *i. e.* crupper ; meaning that the crupper had broken, and Durie, saddle and all, had come violently to the ground.

² MS. letter in Calderwood, British Museum, Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1528.

the sum set down in his instructions, as its small sound might rather do harm than good.¹ As he found opportunity, he was to sound the king, also, on the subject of his marriage, naming the King of Denmark's daughter; and to assure him, that his deep animosity against the banished lords, was, in her opinion, immoderate and unjust. Last summer, she said, the Earl of Arran had, in his letters to her, accused them of a conspiracy against his life; and now, recently, she had investigated a similar story brought up by James's ambassador, the justice-clerk: but both tales, in the end, proved so weak and groundless, that she had good cause to think them maliciously devised to serve some end.²

Such were Wotton's open instructions; and as he seconded all he said by a present of eight couple of buckhounds, and brought some noble horses for the royal stud, James received him with the youthful boisterous delight which such gifts usually produced in the royal mind. But the ambassador had a darker and more secret commission. During Gray's late stay at the court of England, he had contrived, with the approval of Elizabeth and the assistance of Walsingham, a plot for the destruction of Arran; and Bellenden the justice-clerk, who had recently visited England, had been prevailed on by the queen to join it. Wotton was now sent down to take the management; and at the moment when he arrived, he found the Master of Gray deliberating with his brother conspirators, whether it were best to seize and *discourt*³ their

¹ MS. State-paper Office, minute, Walsingham to Wotton, May 23, 1585.

² MS. State-paper Office, Instructions to Sir Edward Wotton, April, 1585.

³ To *discourt*; a phrase not unusual in the letters of this time; meaning to banish any minister from the king's presence and councils.

enemy, or to assassinate him. The Lord Maxwell, now best known by the title of Earl of Morton, had joined the plot, having a mortal feud with Arran; and it is not improbable the more violent course would have been chosen, when Gray received, by the hands of Wotton, a letter from Elizabeth, recommending them to spare him. Wotton next day wrote thus to Walsingham:

“By my letter that myself did deliver to the Master of Gray from her majesty, their purpose is altered, at her majesty’s request, to deal with him by violence; notwithstanding, upon the least occasion that shall be offered, they mean to make short work with him.”¹ Gray, also, on the same day, addressed a letter to the English secretary, assuring him, that he would comply with the queen’s wishes, and not resort to violence, except he saw some hazard to his own life. Adding, emphatically and truly, as to his own character, “when life is gone all is gone to me.”²

In the midst of these intrigues, all was bustle and pleasure at the Scottish court. The king hunted, feasted, and made progresses to his different palaces, and the seats of his nobility. The ambassador, in whose society he took much delight, attended him on all his expeditions; occasionally mingling state affairs with the chase, or the masque, or the banquet; recommending the speedy adjustment of the league with Elizabeth; sounding him lightly on the point of his marriage; touching on the melancholy divisions amongst his nobility, which were increased by his continued severity to the banished lords; and sometimes adverting, with extreme caution, and in general terms, to the delicate subject of the promised pension. To

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, May 31, 1585.

² Ibid. Master of Gray to Walsingham, May 31, 1585.

the league with England, James showed the strongest inclination. It appeared to him, he said, most wise and necessary, that the "confederacy," which had recently been entered into by the various Roman Catholic princes, to prosecute the professors of the reformed faith, should be met by a union of the Protestant powers in their own defence; and when the various heads of this treaty, transmitted by Walsingham to Wotton, were laid before him, they met with his cordial approbation.¹ On his marriage, he showed no disposition to speak with seriousness; and Gray assured Wotton, that to deal lightly in that matter would be best policy, his young master having no inclination to match himself at this moment. His mind was wholly engrossed with his pastime, hunting, and his buckhounds. Of this passion, a ludicrous outbreak occurred shortly before Wotton's arrival. James, at the end of a sharp and successful run, calling for a cup of wine, drank to all his dogs; and, in particular, selecting and taking the paw of an old hound, named Tell True, who had greatly distinguished himself, he thus apostrophized his favourite: "Tell True, I drink to thee above all my hounds; and would sooner trust thy tongue than either Craig or the bishop." Craig was the royal chaplain, and the prelate, Montgomery bishop of Glasgow. This anecdote was reported again to the banished ministers of the Kirk; and mourned over more seriously, and as pointing to a deeper depravity, than it seems to have indicated.²

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, 5th June, 1585. Ibid. June 7, 1585, Heads of the League. Ibid. Walsingham to Wotton, June 27, 1585. Also, ibid. Thomas Miller to Archibald Douglas, July 8, 1585.

² Calderwood MS. British Museum, fol. 1528, David Hume to Mr. James Carmichael, March 20, 1584-5.

Wotton was pleased to find that James continued constant in his resolution not to enter into any association with the captive queen; but, on the other hand, there were two subjects on which the young monarch was immoveable,—his love for Arran, and his enmity to the banished Protestant lords and their ministers. These were most serious impediments in the way of the negotiation; and as the conspirators suspected that Arran was already intriguing with France, to traverse the league with England, many secret conversations took place between the English ambassador and the conspirators, as to the propriety of cutting off this powerful favourite at once, before he should do more mischief. Wotton duly and minutely communicated what passed at such interviews, to Walsingham and Elizabeth; and although the letters are, in many places, written in cipher, and wherever the intended murder is directly mentioned, the words have been partially scored out, still, fortunately for the truth, we have a key to the cipher, and the erasure is often legible. Strange and revolting as it may sound to the ears of modern jurisconsults, it is nevertheless certain, that the Lord Justice-clerk Bellenden, the late ambassador to England, and the second highest criminal judge in the country, promised Wotton to find an assassin of Arran, if he would engage that his royal mistress would protect him. Wotton was much puzzled with this, and still more embarrassed when he received a private visit from the proposed murderer himself; who figures in his letter as 38, and appears to have been Douglas provost of Lincluden.¹ The English ambassador had been carefully warned not to implicate Elizabeth, by any promises, but to leave the

¹ MS. letter, Wotton to Walsingham, June 9, 1585. Caligula, C. viii. fol. 109.

matter to themselves; and as it is curious to observe how, in those times, an ambassador informed a secretary of state of an intended assassination, and probed his mind as to the encouragement which should be held out, it may be interesting to give some short passages of his letter to Walsingham. "The Tuesday, in the morning, 38 came likewise to me, that used, in effect, the same discourse that ——— had done before, all tending to a necessity of ———; which, for the weal of the realms, should be done so that the doers of it have thanks for their labour. I propounded to him, whether he might not be better *discourted* by way of justice. 'Yea,' quoth he, 'worthily for twenty offences; but the king will not admit such proceedings.' Then I asked if 20 [Morton] might not attempt it, seeing he was already engaged; but that, for want of secrecy, he said, and distance, was full of danger. At last I perceived, by his speech, that himself was to do it. * * * The thing he requires, as he saith, is to have thanks for his labours, and for his good affection he bears to her majesty; and if he fortune to despatch it, that he be relieved with some money, to support him in the estate of a gentleman, till he were able to recover the king's favour again; and this I trust, quoth he, 14 [the Earl of Leicester] and 15 [Mr. Secretary] will not deny. In general speeches, I told him that your honours were personages that had him in special recommendation. * * * I told him I would make relation of this matter to your honours: and he said he would write himself to Mr. Secretary; and so praying me, if I did write aught, to commit his name to cipher, we departed."¹ This is a very shocking picture; but

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 195, Wotton to

the quiet way in which the intended murderer of Arran talked of his projected deed, is, perhaps, less abhorrent than Wotton's own words to the justice-clerk, when this dignitary of the law pleaded the necessity of cutting him off, and offered to provide the man to do it. "I paused a while," so Wotton wrote to Walsingham, "and remembering that I had no commission to persuade them, or animate therein, further than they saw cause themselves, specially in things of this nature, I durst not promise aught to encourage them; and therefore told him, that I wist not what to say to the matter. To move her majesty I would not; neither did I think it fit for her to hear of it beforehand: to abuse them I would not; only, for mine own part, I was commanded to increase their credit with the king so long as I abode here. * * I wished rather, if it might be, to have him discouraged. * * In the end, to be quit of him, (for, to be plain with your honour, I found myself in a great strait and desire not to be acquainted with the matter, which, if it must be done, I wished rather to have been done ere I came hither,) I asked what opinion 38 [the provost] had hereof, and wished him to confer with him, which he said he would, and departed."¹ With 38's opinion, and offer, in his own person, to finish the business, we are already acquainted. But it is needless to get farther involved in the meshes of this conspiracy, from which Arran escaped at this time, by his own vigilance and the coldness of the ambassador, who would fain have ensured the profits of success, without the responsibility of failure.

Walsingham, June 1, 1585. Also, MS. letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, July 29, 1585.

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, fol. 195. Caligula, C. viii. June 1, 1585.

In the mean time, Wotton had completely succeeded in the principal and avowed object of his mission. James had determined that the proposed league between England and his kingdom, for the defence of religion, should be concluded. He had revised and amended the various articles; and, with the view of bringing forward the subject, had assembled a convention of his nobility at St. Andrews, when an event occurred, which threatened to throw all into confusion. This was the slaughter of Lord Russell in a border affray, which took place at a meeting, or day of truce, as it was called, between Sir John Foster and Kerr of Fernyhirst, the wardens of the middle marches.¹ There is good reason to believe, that this unfortunate affair was wholly unpremeditated, for so Foster himself declared in his letter, written to Walsingham the day after;² but as Fernyhirst happened to be the intimate friend of Arran, it instantly occurred to the crafty diplomacy of the English secretary, and Wotton the ambassador,³ that a good handle was given by the death of Russell, to procure the disgrace of this hated minister. Foster, therefore, was directed to draw up a paper, the purport of which was to show that the attack had been preconcerted;⁴ and Wotton did not scruple to declare to the young king, that one of the bravest noblemen of England had been murdered by the contrivance of Arran and Fernyhirst.

¹ July 28.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, B.C. Sir John Foster to Walsingham, July 28.

³ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, July 31, 1585, St. Andrews.

⁴ MS. State-paper Office, B.C. Sir John Foster's Reasons to prove that the murder of Lord Russell was intended. This paper probably misled Camden, who gives an exaggerated account of the whole dispute. Kennet, vol. ii. p. 505.

James, who was cast down at this interruption of the league, and unprepared for the violence of Wotton, could not conceal or command his feelings, but shed tears like a child; protested his own innocence; and wished all the lords of the borders dead, provided Lord Russell were alive again. Nor were these mere words: Arran was imprisoned in the castle of St. Andrews; Fernyhirst was threatened to be sent to stand his trial in England; and a strict investigation into the whole circumstances of the alleged murder took place. But the result rather evinced the innocence, than established the guilt of Fernyhirst. Arran, meanwhile, bribed the Master of Gray, who procured his imprisonment at St. Andrews to be exchanged for a nominal confinement to his own castle at Kinneil; and this scheme for the ruin of the court favourite, bid fair, by its unexpected result, to re-establish his influence over the young king, and increase his power.¹

All this fell heavily on Wotton and Walsingham. Arran had resumed his intrigues with France; it was believed that he had adopted the interests of the imprisoned queen, who, as we shall immediately see, was now busily engaged in organizing that great plot for the invasion of England and her own delivery from captivity, which was known by the name of Babington's conspiracy. At the same moment Burghley and Walsingham, who, by intercepting Mary's letters, had discovered her designs against their royal mistress, were occupied in weaving those toils around Mary, and possessing themselves of those

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, July 29 and 30, 1585; also *ibid.* same to same, August 6, and 7, 1585, St. Andrews; and *ibid.* August 13, 1585, same to same; and *ibid.* August 19, 1585, same to same; and *ibid.* August 21, 1585, same to same.

proofs of her guilt, by which they trusted to bring her to the scaffold. It was to them, therefore, of the utmost consequence, that the league between England and Scotland should be concluded before they made their great effort against Mary; that the young king should be bound to Elizabeth by ties for mutual defence and the maintenance of the established religion; and that Arran, and French interests and intrigues, should not repossess their power over his mind. Yet the only counterpoise to Arran, in James's affections, lay in the Master of Gray, their great tool and partisan; and he had betrayed them. There could not be a doubt that Arran owed to him his late deliverance from prison. Gray had proved false, too, at the critical moment when he was privy to all their schemes against this favourite; so that it became equally hazardous to trust him or to throw him off. What, then, was to be done? It was necessary to act rapidly—to act decidedly; and yet it was almost impossible for Elizabeth's ministers to make a single move against Arran without the fear of failure. From this difficulty they were delivered by the fertile brain and flagitious principles of the very man who had so recently betrayed them—the Master of Gray. He, too, had his misgivings as to the insecurity of the ground on which he stood, and in his dilemma sought the advice of Archibald Douglas, now in banishment in England, the intimate friend of Walsingham, and equally familiar with the party of the exiled lords and the expatriated ministers of the Kirk; who, since the fall of Morton, had found a retreat in England. To this man,—who had been stained by the murder of Darnley, and since then engaged in innumerable plots, sometimes for, and sometimes against the queen-mother—Gray addressed

a singular letter, which yet remains, in which he laid open his secret heart, and required his advice, as the friend he loved best in the world. He told him frankly that the queen of England had deserted and almost ruined him. It was by her advice, and relying upon her promises of support, that he had matched himself against Arran; that he had sought Arran's life, and Arran his: and now that he was reduced to a strait, where were all her promises? To continue to deal frankly with her was impossible; and must lead to his overthrow. What parties, then, were left to be embraced?—Arran, the imprisoned queen, the French politics, the Roman Catholic interests in Europe? This was impossible. Arran, although obliged to him for his recent escape, was the falsest of men, and never to be long trusted; Arran knew, too, that he would have taken his life. As to the Scottish queen, he (Gray) could never hope to be trusted by Mary after deserting her; and his perfidy was perfectly known to the whole body of the Catholics. One party only remained, by uniting himself with which a revolution might be effected in Scotland: the party of the banished lords, and their expatriated friends, the ministers of the Kirk. If Angus, Mar, and the Master of Glamis, could make up their differences with their exiled brethren, Lords Claud and John Hamilton, with whom they were still at feud, and unite in invading Scotland, there would be little doubt of a strong diversion in their favour. To them Gray said he would promise all his influence; it might happen, too, that he would find means to rid them of Arran; but as to this he would make no stipulation. Yet, if the deed could still be done so secretly, that his knowledge of the “doer” should not be suspected, he would still make

the attempt. At all events, they should be joined by Bothwell and Lord Hume; and he could promise, also, he thought, for Cessford. He concluded his letter by assuring Douglas, that this was the only plan left, which had the slightest likelihood of success; that if the exiled noblemen were ever to make the attempt, now was the time when he would promise them they should muster at least two to one against their enemies; and he ended his letter with these emphatic words: Persuade yourself, if the banished lords come down, the king shall either yield or leave Scotland.¹

This new plot was readily embraced by the outlawed lords and the ministers of the Kirk, and warmly encouraged by Wotton, the English ambassador, who immediately communicated it to Walsingham, in a letter from Dunbarton, whither he had accompanied the young king upon a hunting party. The Master of Gray had sought him out, he said, and informed him, that he was now convinced they had run all this while a wrong course, in seeking to disgrace Arran with the king, whose love towards him was so extreme, that he would never suffer a hair of his head to fall to the ground, if he might help it. It was evident, he continued, that as long as Arran should remain in favour with the king, it would be impossible to bring home the lords by fair means; that, unless they might be restored, the league could neither be sure, nor the Master of Gray, and the rest of his party, in safety: for Arran, recovering the king's person, would be able, with his credit, to ruin them, and divert the king from the queen; or, finding his affection towards her irremoveable, would not stick to convey him into

¹ MS. letter, British Museum, Caligula, C. viii. fol. 222, Master of Gray to Archibald Douglas, August 14, 1585.

France. Wotton then proceeded to inform Walsingham of Gray's new plot. It was the advice, he said, of this experienced intriguer, that her majesty, having so good occasion ministered by the death of my Lord Russell, should pretend to take the matter very grievously, and refuse to conclude the league for this time. She might then let slip the lords, (meaning Angus and his associates,) who, with some support of money, and their friends in Scotland, might take Arran, and seize on the king's person ; in which exploit Gray promised them the best aid he and his faction could give. Gray added, that if Walsingham found this overture well liked at the English court, he would direct a special friend of his and the exiled lords, very shortly into England, who might confer with Angus and the rest about the execution of the plot. This (continued Wotton, addressing Walsingham) was the effect of Gray's whole speech, saving that, in the end, he said, in answer of an objection I made, that he would undertake this thing, being *alone*, to bring the league to a perfect conclusion.¹

This letter was written on the 25th of August ; and so actively did Gray proceed with his plot, that, within a week after, it had assumed a more serious shape. In Scotland he had gained the Earl of Morton, formerly Lord Maxwell, a powerful border baron, who had been suspected to be in the interest of Arran. In England, not only Angus, Mar, Glamis, and their friends, were secured as actors, but also the Lords Claud and John Hamilton, the mortal enemies of Arran, who had remained in banishment since the year 1579, when they were forfeited for the murder

¹ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, Dunbarton, August 25, 1585. This letter is written partly in cipher ; but I quote it from the contemporary decipher written above each character or number.

of the Regents Moray and Lennox. These two noblemen agreed to a reconciliation with Angus and his party, with whom they had been at feud, and determined to unite against Arran.

Wotton, the English ambassador, lent to all this his active assistance ; and his letters to Walsingham, which are still preserved, present us with an interesting picture of the growth of the conspiracy.¹ Some time before this, the Earl of Morton, who was warden of the west borders, and whom few noblemen in Scotland could surpass in military power and experience, had incurred the resentment of the king by an attack upon the Laird of Johnston, in which he slew Captain Lammie, who commanded a company of the royal forces which James had sent to reinforce Johnston. This enraged the king, who, by the advice of Arran, determined to lead an army against the insurgent ;² and at this crisis of personal danger, overtures being made to Morton, he, to secure his safety, readily embraced the offers of Gray, and joined the conspiracy.³ This was a great point gained, and gave the utmost satisfaction to Wotton and Walsingham, to whom it was immediately communicated.⁴

But although nothing could exceed the activity and talent (if we may use this term) of Gray and Wotton, in the management of this plot, their efforts were counteracted by the coldness and delays of Elizabeth,

¹ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 1, 1585. This letter is greatly defaced, by some person having erased the proper names and emphatic words ; but enough is left to show the nature of the plot, and the full approval of Wotton. Also, State-paper Office, same to same.

² State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585.

³ *Historie of James the Sext*, pp. 212, 213. State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585, Stirling.

⁴ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 30, 1585, Stirling.

and the reviving influence of Arran. This nobleman, still nominally confined to his house at Kinneil, on the charge of being accessory to Lord Russell's death, was yet daily recovering his power over the king's mind: and it was now well known that, having been deceived and thrown off by Elizabeth, he had embraced the interests of France, from which government he had recently received a large supply of money.¹ Under his protection, Holt, Dury, and Bruce, three noted Jesuits, were secretly harboured in Scotland,² and busily engaged in intrigues for the restoration of the queen-mother, and the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic faith.³ Nor was this all. Arran, as we have already seen, could organize plots, and frame secret schemes for surprise and assassination, as well as his enemies. He had been too early educated in the sanguinary and unscrupulous policy of these times not to be an adept in such matters; and whilst Gray and Wotton were weaving their meshes round him, they knew that counter-plots were being formed against themselves, of the existence of which they were certain, although they could not detect the agents. The two great factions into which the state of Scotland was divided, were thus mutually on their guard, and jealously watching each other; both armed, both intent on their dark purposes, busy in gaining partisans and in anticipating the designs of their opponents; so that it seemed a race who should soonest spring the mine which was to overwhelm and destroy their adversary.

In such circumstances, nothing could be more pain-

¹ Orig. State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 4, 1585, Stirling. Also, same to same, August 21, 1585.

² Ibid.

³ Orig. State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, Stirling, September 18, 1585.

ful and precarious than the situation of Wotton, the English ambassador. He knew, and repeatedly wrote to Walsingham, that his life was in danger. His intrigues had been partially discovered by Arran. Colonel Stewart, the brother of that nobleman, and captain of the Royal Guard, had upbraided him for his perfidy before the king; and although the ambassador gave him the lie on the spot, the truth was too well known for any to be deceived by this bravado.¹ It was under the influence of such feelings that he thus addressed Walsingham:—“Though ye in England be slow in resolving, Arran and his faction sleep not out their time: for they are now gathering all the forces they can make, and, within three or four days, Arran meaneth to come to the court, and to possess himself of the king, in despite of the Queen of England, as he saith; which, if he do, I mean to retire myself to the borders for the safety of my life, whereof I am in great danger, as my friends which hear the Stewarts’ threatenings daily advertise me. Your honour knoweth what a barbarous nation this is, and how little they can skill of points of honour. Where every man carrieth a pistol at his girdle, (as here they do,) it is an easy matter to kill one out of a window or door, and no man able to discover who did it. Neither doth it go for payment with those men to say, I am an ambassador, and therefore privileged; for even their regents and kings have been subject to their violence.

“This notwithstanding,” he continued, “I would not be so resolute to depart, if, by my tarrying, I might do her majesty any service. But I find the king so enchanted by Arran, and myself so hated of

¹ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 22, 1585.

him, as I cannot hope to negotiate to any purpose so long as Arran shall be in court. If," he added, "the Queen of England would send down the lords, they will be able to work wonders here, and to remedy all inconvenients. If the Queen of England do it not, this country will be clean lost, and all her friends wrecked. Other hope to England than in them, I see none; the king being young and easily carried, and most about him either Papists or Atheists."¹ In a second letter, written to Walsingham on the same day, Wotton added this emphatic paragraph:

"The Master of Gray,² through our long English delay, findeth himself driven to a great strait. For the king presseth him greatly to meet with Arran, and threateneth, that, unless he do it, he shall have just cause to suspect him. But the Master assureth me he will, by one means or other, avoid it, and will hold good these fourteen days. Therefore, what ye will do, must be speedily done.

"I am not, for my own part," he added, "the greatest favourer of [violent courses,] and, therefore, have hitherto rather related other men's speeches, and opinions than given my advice. But now matters frame so overthwartly, as I must needs conclude, that no good can be done here, but by the [way] of ———;³ which being used, you may bring even the proudest of us to [cry⁴] for misericorde on our knees."⁵

All was now ripe for execution of the plot. Morton had been gained, and his force was in readiness on the border. Angus, Mar, and Glammis, with their friends,

¹ State-paper Office, Sept. 22, 1585, Stirling, Wotton to Walsingham.

² Scored, but tolerably clear.

³ Ciphers occur here. The word was probably "violence."

⁴ I put [cry] in brackets, as the word is not clear in the original.

⁵ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, September 22, 1585, Stirling.

had, by the mediation of the banished ministers, been reconciled to the Lords Claud and John Hamilton. The Master of Gray, in the mean time, remained at court, and played into the hands of his brother conspirators; watching his opportunities; taking every advantage against the opposite faction; communicating, through Wotton and Archibald Douglas, with the exiled lords and the ministers; and keeping up an intercourse with Morton, by the provost of Lincluden, a Douglas.¹ It was this same fierce partisan, who, in the former conspiracy, had been pitched upon to put Arran to death;² and as Gray had declared to Douglas his resolution to “essay” the same again, if it could be quietly and secretly achieved, it is not improbable that the provost may have been again engaged to further the cause by assassinating this hated person. Such being the ripeness of all things, Wotton, who still remained at the Scottish court, although in daily danger of his life, wrote hastily to Walsingham, on the 5th of October, assuring him, that the king had resolved to send his forces against Morton before the 20th of October, and would probably lead them in person. Arran, he added, was to be liberated; and if the lords meant to surprise him, and strike the blow with any hope of success, it must be done instantly.³

These arguments had the desired effect; and Elizabeth, being assured that no time was to be lost, commanded her ambassador to require an audience of the King of Scots, and make a peremptory demand for

¹ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, Sept. 30, 1585, Stirling. Also, another letter, written on the same day, from the same to the same.

² MS. letter, Wotton to Walsingham, June 9, 1585, Caligula, C. viii.

³ State-paper Office, Wotton to Walsingham, October 5, 1585, Stirling.

the delivery into her hands of Kerr of Fernyhirst, whom she stigmatized as the murderer of Lord Russell. It was certain that this would be refused; and her object was to afford a pretext for the retirement of Wotton from the Scottish court, at the moment when the conspiracy, which he had organized with such persevering activity, was to take effect.¹ But matters framed themselves otherwise. Early in October, the banished lords, Angus, Mar, and the Master of Glamis, who were then in London, received Elizabeth's permission to set out on their enterprise; but by the advice of the ministers of the Kirk, their companions in exile, they first held an exercise of humiliation at Westminster, and with many tears, (so writes the historian of the Kirk,) besought God to strengthen their arm, and grant them success against their enemies.² They then set forward, accompanied by their ministers, Mr. Andrew Melvil, Mr. Patrick Galloway, and Mr. Walter Balcanquhal; and pressing forward to Berwick, met there with the Hamiltons and their forces.

These movements could not be concealed; and the tidings flying quickly into Scotland, became known to the king and the English ambassador at the same moment. It was a stirring and remarkable crisis. James, by this time, was fully aware of the intrigues of Wotton; and resolving to make him a hostage for his own security, gave orders to seize the ambassador in his house, and carry him with the army, which was then on the point of marching against Morton. Wotton, however, received intimation of his danger: at night-fall he threw himself upon a fleet horse, galloped to Berwick, and from that city wrote, in

¹ Copy, State-paper Office, October 12, 1585, Wotton to Walsingham. Also, draft, October 11, 1585, Walsingham to Wotton.

² Calderwood, MS. Hist. Ayscough, 4736, fol. 1545.

much agitation, to Walsingham and the queen, declaring that he had been plunged into the greatest difficulty by the reports of the advance of the lords; that he knew the king meant to arrest him; and that he had preferred rather to flee from Scotland, and peril her majesty's displeasure, than to remain and thus bring ruin upon the common cause.¹

All was now confusion at court. Arran, breaking from his ward, hurried from Kinneil to court, and rushing into the young king's presence, declared that the banished lords were already in Scotland, and rapidly coming forward with their forces; accused the Master of Gray as the author of the whole conspiracy, and urged James to send for him instantly, and put him to death.² Gray was then absent from court, raising his friends in Perthshire, and was thrown into perplexity and agitation on receiving the king's message. If he disobeyed it, he dreaded the overthrow of the plot, and the retreat of Angus and his friends; if he returned to court, he cast himself within the toils of his mortal enemy Arran. Yet choosing the boldest, which in such a crisis is generally the most successful course, he braved the peril, rode back to court, entered the royal presence, defended himself from the accusation, and was so graciously received, that Arran and his faction had determined, as their last hope, to stab him even in the king's presence,³ when a messenger arrived in fiery haste, with the news that the advanced parties of the banished lords had been seen within a mile of Stirling. They had first met at Kelso, separated to raise their men, con-

¹ State-paper Office, October 15, 1585, Berwick, Wotton to Elizabeth; same to Walsingham.

² Relation of the Master of Gray, by Bannatyne Club, p. 59.

³ Ibid.

centrated their whole troops at Falkirk on the 31st October, and from this marched towards that city, at the head of eight thousand men. To resist such a force would have been absurd. Arran knew that his head was the only mark they shot at; that he was surrounded by enemies within as well as without the town; and that his life was not safe for a moment. As the only resource left him, therefore, he fled secretly from Stirling, accompanied by a single horseman. His retreat was followed by the instant occupation and plunder of the town by Angus and his forces; whilst Montrose, Crawford, and the other lords of the opposite faction, threw themselves, as their last resource, into the castle; which (to use the Master of Gray's own expression) was in a manner crammed full of great personages with the king—some friends, some enemies.¹ Preparations for a siege were now commenced; and the lords had already set up their banners against the "spur," or principal bastion, when the king sent out the Master of Gray with a flag of truce, to demand the cause of their coming. They replied, it was to offer their duty to his majesty, and kiss his hands: to which it was answered, that the king was not at that moment solicitous of an interview; but if they would retire for a brief space, their lands and honours should be restored. Still, however, they insisted on a personal interview, and James declared his readiness to agree to it on three conditions: safety to his own person; no innovation to be made in the state; and an assurance for the lives of such persons as he should name. To the two first they instantly consented; to the last, they replied, that as they were the injured persons, and their

¹ Relation of the Master of Gray, by Bannatyne Club, p. 60.

enemies were about the king, they must, for their own security, have them delivered into their hands, with the castles and strengths of the realm.¹ This negotiation, which was conducted by Gray, the arch-contriver of the whole plot, could only terminate in one way. James was forced to submit: the gates were opened; the Earls of Montrose, Crawford, and Rothes, with Lord Down, Sir William Stewart, and others, made prisoners; and the banished lords conducted into the king's presence. On their admission, they fell on their knees; and Lord Arbroath, the head of the house of Hamilton, taking precedence from his near alliance to the crown, entreated his majesty's gracious acceptance of their duty, and declared that they were come in the most humble manner to solicit his pardon. It was strange to see men who, a few hours before, with arms in their hands, had dictated terms of submission to their sovereign, now sue so submissively for mercy: but the scene was well acted on both sides; and James, an early adept in hypocrisy, performed his part with much address.

"My lord," said he to Hamilton, "I never saw you before; but you were a faithful servant of the queen my mother, and of all this company have been the most wronged. But for the rest of you, (casting his glance over the circle on their knees,) if you have been exiles, was it not your own fault? And as for you, Francis, (he continued, turning to Bothwell,) who has stirred up your unquiet spirit to come in arms against your prince? When did I ever wrong thee? To you all, who I believe meant no harm to my person, I am ready, remembering nothing that is past, to give my hand and heart; on one condition,

¹ Relation of the Master of Gray. Papers of the Master of Gray, printed by Bannatyne Club, p. 60.

however,—that you carry yourselves, henceforth, as dutiful subjects.”¹

This interview was followed by measures which showed that these apparently submissive lords were not disposed to lose their opportunity. Arran was proclaimed a traitor at the market-place, and in the king's name; the royal guard altered, and its command given to the Master of Glamis; the castle of Dunbarton delivered to Lord Arbroath; that of Edinburgh to Coldingknowes; Tantallon to Angus; and Stirling to Mar. On the same day, a pacification and remission was published in favour of the exiles, who now ruled every thing at their pleasure. All faults were solemnly forgiven; and the whole of the measures lately carried into effect with such speed and success, declared to be done for the king's service.²

Immediately after the seizure of Stirling, the Master of Gray communicated the entire success of the plot to the English court, by letters to the queen herself, Archibald Douglas, and Secretary Walsingham. He assured the English secretary, that the banished men were in as good favour as they ever enjoyed: nothing was now required but that Elizabeth should send an ambassador, and the intended league between the two kingdoms would be concluded without delay.³ The queen, accordingly, despatched Sir William Knolles, who had audience at Linlithgow on the 23d November, and was received by James with much courtesy. The king professed himself to be entirely at her majesty's devotion; declared he was ready

¹ Spottiswood, pp. 342, 343.

² Relation of the Master of Gray, p. 61.

³ State-paper Office, Master of Gray to Walsingham, November 6, 1585.

to join in league with England, both in matters of religion and civil policy ; and that, although at first offended at the sudden invasion of Angus and his friends, he was now satisfied that they sought only their own restitution, and, indeed, had found them so loving and obedient, that he had rather reason to bless God so great a revolution had been effected without bloodshed, than to regret any thing that had happened. Knolles, too, as far as he had an opportunity of judging, considered these declarations sincere. He observed no distrust on the part either of the lords or their sovereign. They kept no guard round him, but suffered him to hunt daily with a moderate train ; and as Arran had fled to the west coast, and Montrose, Crawford, and the rest of that party, were in custody, no fear of change or attack seemed to be entertained.¹

Such was Knolles' opinion ; although, in the end of his letter, he hinted that the king might dissemble according to his custom ; a suspicion which next day seemed to have increased.² Apparently, however, these misgivings were without foundation ; for a parliament assembled shortly after at Linlithgow, in which it was unanimously resolved that there should be a strict league concluded with Elizabeth.³ On this occasion, the king, if we may judge from his address to the three estates, expressed extraordinary devotedness to England, and the most determined hostility to the Roman Catholics. He alluded to the confe-

¹ State-paper Office, Mr. William Knolles to Walsingham, Linlithgow, November 23, 1585.

² State-paper Office, Knolles to Walsingham, Linlithgow, Nov. 24, 1585.

³ State-paper Office, certified copy of the Act of Parliament authorizing the King of Scots to make league with the Queen's Majesty of England, December 10, 1585.

derating together of the "bastard Christians," (to use his own words,) meaning, as he said, the Papists, in a league, which they termed holy, for the subversion of true religion in all realms through the whole world. These leagues, he observed, were composed of Frenchmen and Spaniards, assisted with the money of the King of Spain and the pope, and must be resisted, if Protestants had either conscience, honour, or love of themselves. To this end, he was determined, he said, to form a counter-league, in which he was assured all Christian princes would willingly join; and as the Queen of England was not only a true Christian princess, but nearest to them of all others, in consanguinity, neighbourhood, and good will, it was his fixed resolution to begin with her.¹ To second this, the king despatched Sir William Keith with a friendly message to the English queen, requesting her to send down an ambassador, by whose good offices the proposed treaty might be carried into effect;² and Randolph, whose veteran experience in Scottish diplomacy was considered as peculiarly qualifying him for such an errand, was intrusted with the negotiation. He arrived in Edinburgh on the 26th February, having been met at Musselburgh, six miles from the capital, by the justice-clerk, and a troop of forty or fifty gentlemen, many of them belonging to the royal household.

The English ambassador was prepared to find his mission one of no easy execution;³ for in the interval between the parliament at Linlithgow and his arrival

¹ Copy, State-paper Office, the Scottish king's Speech concerning a League in Religion with England.

² State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, Berwick, February 24, 1585-6.

³ Copy, State-paper Office, Roger Ashton to (as I conjecture) Walsingham, January 17, 1585-6.

at court, the fair prospects anticipated by Gray and Knolles had become clouded. An ambassador had been sent from France, and was reported to have brought with him a freight of French crowns. Holt the Jesuit, and other brethren of that order, were still secretly harboured in the north, supported by Huntley, Montrose, Crawford, and other nobles of the Roman Catholic faith; the agents of the queen-mother were busy with their intrigues, both in Scotland and in England; and Morton, that powerful baron, whose union with Angus and the Hamiltons had so recently turned the scale against Arran, presuming upon his recent success, openly professed the Roman Catholic faith, and caused mass to be celebrated in the provost church of Lincluden.¹

All these were ominous appearances; and although James had instantly summoned Morton, and imprisoned him in Edinburgh castle, yet the king was known to be so great a dissembler, that few trusted his professions.

Randolph had been instructed by his royal mistress to congratulate the monarch upon the quiet state of his realm; to express her willingness to proceed with the treaty, for a firm and lasting religious league between the two kingdoms, which had been interrupted; and to warn him against the intrigues of France. He was also to require the delivery of Fernyhirst, who, she still insisted, was guilty of the murder of Lord Russell; to urge James to prosecute Morton for his late audacious contempt of the law; to advise the severest measures against Arran, who still lurked in the west of Scotland; and to insist on the delivery of Holt, Brereton, and other Jesuits; or, at least, to their

¹ Spottiswood, p. 344. Copy, State-paper Office, Roger Ashton to Walsingham, January 17, 1585-6.

banishment from his dominions. In return for all this, should it be faithfully performed, Elizabeth declared her readiness to fix a yearly pension on the king, and to grant a solemn promise, under her hand and seal, that she would permit no measures to be brought forward against any title he might pretend to the succession to the English crown.¹

On being admitted to an audience, which took place the 3d day after his arrival, Randolph, at first, found nothing but smiles and fair weather at court. The king assured him, that he felt himself bound to the queen his mistress, as strictly as if she were his own sister; that he esteemed her advice the best he could possibly receive, and meant, God willing, to follow it.² Having spoken this so loud, that most that stood by could hear it, James, entering into more private talk, told him of the arrival of the French ambassador, and spoke slightingly of his youth and ignorance of Scotland and Scotsmen. This led to some remarks on the house of Guise, and the intrigues of the Jesuits; to which the king answered, he had but one God to serve; and as for the Papists, that Morton himself, and some others, would be arraigned within a few days. Before the audience was concluded, Randolph exhibited a little packet, "curiously sealed and made up," which he gallantly pressed to his lips, and delivered to the young monarch. It was a private letter from Elizabeth, which James, stepping aside, read with every appearance of devotion; and, placing it in his bosom, declared that all his good sister's desires should be fulfilled.³

¹ Original draft, State-paper Office, principal points of Mr. Randolph's Instructions.

² MS. letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to — (Walsingham?) March 2, 1585-6.

³ Ibid.

These fair professions, however, were not fully to be trusted; for Randolph, in a subsequent conversation with Secretary Maitland and Bellenden the justice-clerk, became aware that great offers had been made to the young king by France; and that, although the royal hand was, as yet, uncontaminated by French gold, the court necessities were so urgent, that it was not certain how long this magnanimity might continue. These counter intrigues, however, were for the present defeated; and the ambassador, with great address, procured the king's signature to the league with England, and sent Thomas Milles, his assistant and secretary, to present it to Elizabeth for her ratification.¹ Milles was, at the same time, instructed to warn the English queen to have special care, at that moment, of her own person; and to reveal the particulars of a conspiracy against her, which was then hatching in Scotland. On this delicate point the ambassador wrote both to Burghley and Walsingham: but he referred simply to Milles' verbal report, and added to the English secretary this ominous sentence; "The men, and, perchance, the women, are yet living, and their hearts and minds all one, that devised or procured the devilish mischiefs that hitherto, by God's providence, she hath escaped. You have heard, both out of Spain and France, what is to be doubted out of the Low Countries. I have seen what warning hath been given for her majesty to look unto herself; and, in the presence of God, I fear as much despite and devilishness from hence as from them all; though I judge the king as free as myself, and could himself be content that he were out of this country."²

State-paper Office, April 1, 1586, Randolph to Lord Burghley, by Thomas Milles.

² State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, April 2, 1586.

These disclosures of Milles to Elizabeth unfortunately do not appear; but there can be no doubt that they were connected with that conspiracy afterwards known as "Babington's plot." It is certain that this plot had its ramifications in Scotland; that the captive queen had still a powerful party in that kingdom, at the head of which was Lord Claud Hamilton; and many of her adherents were busily intriguing with France, Spain, and Rome. The league with England was distasteful to Secretary Maitland and a large portion of the nobility. They maintained, and with great appearance of reason, that the king, before he had been so readily induced to sign a treaty of so much importance, ought to have secured some commercial privileges to his subjects, similar to those enjoyed by them in France; that Elizabeth should have made some public and explicit declaration regarding their master's title to the English crown; and that the annuity which he was to receive ought to bear some proportion to the large offers of those foreign princes, which his adherence to England had compelled him to refuse. All this, they said, he had neglected; and, without consulting his council, had recklessly rushed into a treaty which he would speedily repent.¹ This threat seemed prophetic: on Milles' arrival with Elizabeth's signature to the league, James discovered that the pension, which, as first promised by Wotton, amounted to twenty thousand crowns, had dwindled down to four thousand pounds; and the same envoy brought the king a private letter, written with her own hand, in terms of such severe and sarcastic admonition, that it utterly disgusted

¹ State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Walsingham, May 6, 1586. Also, original draft, State-paper Office, Walsingham's abridgment of Archibald Douglas's letters of the 5th, 6th, and 11th May.

and enraged him.¹ It was presented by Randolph, in an interview which he had with James in the garden of the palace; and, as he read it, the young monarch colouring with anger, swore "by God," that, had he known what little account the queen would make of him, she should have waited long enough before he had signed any league, or disobliged his nobles, to reap nothing but disappointment and contempt.

This fit of disgust was fostered, as may easily be believed, by Secretary Maitland and his friends; and it required all the address of Randolph to soften the royal resentment and hold the king to his engagements. At last, however, every thing was arranged, and the ambassador, in a letter to Walsingham, congratulating himself upon a speedy return home, advised this minister to be careful in the choice of his successor at the Scottish court. "Your honour knows," said he, "that *non ex omni ligno fit Mercurius*; and he has need of a long spoon that feeds with the devil."²

Having procured the young king's signature to the articles of the league, Randolph left the Scottish court; and in the succeeding month the negotiation was finally concluded by the commissioners of both countries, who met at Berwick.³ In this important treaty, it was agreed between the Queen of England and the Scottish king, that they should inviolably maintain the religion now professed in both countries, against all adversaries, notwithstanding any former engagements to the contrary. If any invasion should be made into their dominions, or any injuries should be offered them by foreign princes or states, no aid

¹ State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, Edinburgh, 13th May, 1586.

² Ibid. May 28, 1586.

³ Camden's Elizabeth, in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 513. MS. letter, State-paper Office, Randolph to Walsingham, June 24, 1586. Ibid. Proclamation at Berwick of the Commissioners, July 5, 1586.

was to be given to such foreign attack by either of the contracting parties, whatever league, affinity, or friendship, might happen to exist between them and such foreign powers. If England were invaded by a foreign enemy, in any part remote from Scotland, the king of Scots promised, at Elizabeth's request, to send two thousand horse, or five thousand foot, to her assistance, but at her expense; and if Scotland were attacked, the queen was to despatch three thousand horse, or six thousand foot, to assist James; but if the invasion of England should take place within sixty miles of the Scottish border, James engaged, without delay, to muster all the force he could, and join the English army. If Ireland should be invaded, all Scottish subjects were to be interdicted, under pain of rebellion, from passing over into that kingdom. All rebels, harboured within either country, were to be delivered up, or compelled to depart the realm; no contract was to be made by either of the princes, with any foreign state, to the prejudice of this league; all former treaties of amity between the predecessors of the two princes were to remain in force; and on the Scottish king's attaining the age of twenty-five, he engaged that the "league should be confirmed by parliament; his sister, the English queen, promising the same for her part."¹ It will be observed, that all consideration of the condition or interests of the unhappy Queen of Scots is studiously avoided, both by her son and by Elizabeth. Indeed, her name does not appear to have been once alluded to during the whole of the transactions. It will, however, be seen by the sequel,

¹ MS. State-paper Office, Principal points of the articles of the League, July 5, 1586.

that, although no reference was openly made to Mary, the main object of Elizabeth in completing this strict alliance with the son, was to detect and defeat the intrigues and conspiracies of the mother.

The happy conclusion of this league was a matter of sincere congratulation to the English queen ; but she had intrusted to Randolph another somewhat difficult negotiation. This was to induce James to recall and pardon the well-known Archibald Douglas, whom she had herself recently imprisoned, but who had purchased his freedom by betraying the secrets of the Scottish queen. This gentleman, with whose name and history we are already in some degree familiar, united the manners of a polished courtier to the knowledge of a scholar and a statesman. He was of an ancient and noble house : he had been for years the friend and correspondent of Burghley and Walsingham ; and he was now in great credit with the English queen. But Douglas had a dark as well as a bright side ; and exhibited a contradiction or anomaly in character, by no means unfrequent in those days : the ferocity of a feudal age, gilded, or lacquered over, by a thin coating of civilisation. Externally all was polish and amenity ; truly and at heart the man was a sanguinary, fierce, crafty, and unscrupulous villain. He had been personally present at Darnley's murder, although he only admitted the foreknowledge of it : he had been bred as a retainer of the infamous Bothwell : he had afterwards been employed by the Scottish queen, whom he sold to her enemies ; and Elizabeth's great purpose in now interceding for his return from her court to his own country, was to use his influence with the young king against his mother and her faction. He now brought a letter written by that princess to the king in his

favour;¹ and it is little to James's credit, that he speedily obtained all he asked. A mock trial was got up, a sentence of acquittal pronounced, and Douglas was not only restored to his estates and rank, but admitted into the highest confidence with the sovereign whose father he had murdered. Nay, strange to tell, James held a secret conversation with him on the dark subject of Darnley's assassination; and as Douglas instantly sent a report of it to Walsingham, we get behind the curtain. The king commanded all the courtiers to retire; and, finding himself alone with Douglas, after reading the Queen of England's letter, thus addressed him:

“At your departure, I was your enemy; and now, at your returning, I am and shall be your friend. You are not ignorant what the laws of this realm are, and what best may agree with your honour to be done for your surety. I must confess her majesty's request in your favour to be honourable and favourable, and your desire to have come by assize² to be honest; and I myself do believe that you are innocent of my father's murder, except in foreknowledge and concealing; an fault so common in those days, that no man of any dealing could misknaw;³ and yet so perilous to be revealed, in respect of all the actors of that tragedy, that no man, without extreme danger, could utter any speech thereof, because they did see it and could not amend it: and, therefore, I will impute unto you neither foreknowledge nor concealing; and desire that you will advise by my secretary what may be most agreeable to my honour and your surety

¹ MS. draft, State-paper Office, Elizabeth to James, Scottish Royal Letters, April 6, 1586.

² To have come by assize; to be tried by a jury.

³ Misknaw; be ignorant.

in trial, and it shall be performed.”¹ These are remarkable words, and probably come very near the truth as to the foreknowledge of the king’s murder possessed by every man of any note or consequence in the court. It is evident the king kept at a distance from all direct mention of his mother’s name. The general expressions which he used may either infer that the queen must have known of the intended murder, but could not, without imminent peril, have revealed or prevented it, or that she knew and permitted it. As to Douglas’s own active share in the murder, it was positively asserted by his servant on the scaffold, and at a moment when there could be no temptation to deny or disguise the truth, that he was present at the explosion, and returned from it covered with soil and dust.

¹ MS. letter, State-paper Office, Archibald Douglas to Walsingham, 6th May, 1586.

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

FROM

MANUSCRIPTS,

IN

HER MAJESTY'S STATE-PAPER OFFICE,

AND OTHER COLLECTIONS

HITHERTO UNPRINTED.

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

No. I.

Mary's Escape from Lochleven, pages 36, 37.

THE following minute account of the queen's escape from Lochleven, which is my authority for the new and interesting circumstances given in the text, was communicated by John Beaton, brother of the Archbishop of Glasgow, to the King of France, and transmitted by Petrucci, the envoy or ambassador of the Grand Duke, Cosmo de Medicis, to his master, in a letter dated at Paris, 21st of May, 1568. It is taken from the MS. Collections of Prince Labanoff, who found the original in the secret archives of the house of Medici. Beaton, it will be observed, was on the spot watching at Kinross for the queen on the evening she made her escape. He was a principal contriver of the escape, and an eye-witness and ear-witness of all.

**"MODO CHE LA REGINA DI SCOTIA HA USATO PER LIBERARSI
DALLA PRIGIONE.**

"Advisato detta Regina di Scotia Monsignor di Seton suo confidatissimo Cattolico et molto valoroso cavaliere, per via d'un putto di casa, il quale non ritorno poi, egli si condusse per il giorno determinato con circa 50 cavalli, presso al Lago di Loclevin, dove la Regina era tenuta prigioniera, restando pero egli con 40 di loro, fra certe montagne poco lontano per non essere scoperti da quelli del Castello del lago, e piu presso si fecero gli altri dieci, che smontarono in un vilaggio vicino al lago, mostrando esservi per transito, uno de quali ando in ripa al lago prossimo, et stava col corpo disteso in terra per non esser veduto, aspettando, che la Regina uscisse, secondo l'ordine.

"Alla porta del Castello, si facevano le guardie continuati, giorno e notte, eccetto che mentre ci cenava, nel qual tempo, si chiudeva la Porta con una chiave, andando ogniuno a cena, e la chiave stava sempre sulla tavola, dove il Castellano mangiava, e davanti a lui. Il

Castellano è fratello uterino del Conte de Murray Regente de Scozia, fratello naturale della Regina, e suo mortal nimico.

“La Regina doppo provato di calarsi da una finestra, e non li era riuscito, fece tanto che un paggio del Castellano, il quale essa haver a cio disposto, portando la seconda sera di Maggio un piatto in tavola, con una servietta innanzi al padrone, le misse sopra la chiave, e quella tolse e porto via—che alcuno non s'en'accorse, andato subito dalla Regina. le disse il tutto, e ella che tra tanto s'era messe le vesti della maggior di quelle due cameriere, che le havevano lassate, menando seco per mano la minore, che puo essere una figlia di 10 anni, n'ando col paggio chetamente alla porta et aperta se n'uscì con lui, e con la putta, e serrata la per di fuori con la medesima chiave, senza laquale non si poteva aprire, ne anco di dentro, entra in un piccol batello, che quivi si teneva per servizio del Castello, e spiegato un suo velo bianco, con un fiocco rosso, fe il segno concertato, a chi l'attendeva che ella veniva, al quale segno quello che era disteso in terra su la ripa del lago, levato si, e con un altro segno advisati li Cavaliere del Vilaggio (fra quali era principale, quello che e venuto qua a dar conto di questo fatto a questi Maesta, che e fratello del Ambasciatore di Scotia qua,) e da loro advisati poi quelli della Montagna furono subito al lago, e la Regina che col paggio remando al meglio che poteva, di la con la Dio gratia s'era condotta; raccolsero con infinita allegrezza e messa la a cavallo, col paggio e con la putta, la menarono al Mare 5 miglia indi discosto, per cio che l'andare sempre per terra, dove havevano disegnato saria stato loro di manifesto pericolo.

“Imbarcatisi tutti la condussero a Nidri luogo ti Monsignore di Seiton e di la poi a Amilton, Castello del Duca di Sciatelero, la dove Monsignore d'Arcivescovo di Santa Andrea suo fratello, con altri principali de quella parte l'accolsero e rivererono come Regina. Amilton e luogo forte per battaglia di mano e vicino a Don Bertran porto e Castello fortissimo 4 leghe, ma la Regina non si retira la' si perche e ben sicura in Amilton, comandando a tutta quella contrada, Monsignor S'Andrea sudetto, e non altri, si per poter receiver meglio quei che anderano ad-adjutarla la, che in una fortezza forse non saria cosi, alla quale pero in ogni caso si puo condurre da una sera, a un altra accadendo.

“Tutto quel regno e in moto, chi per la Regina, chi contro di lei col Conte di Moray—Ella ha mandato questo Gentilhuomo¹ a domandar per hora mille archebusieri a queste Maesta, ma che se vorra ricuperare, Edinburg, citta principale, e l'altre fortezze occupate da ribelli, hara bisogno d'esser adjutata da ogni banda, he ha scritta una lettera

¹ Namely, John Beaton.

al Cardinale di Loreno che moveria ogni cuore duro a compassione di lei, et le prime linee sono che ella domanda perdona a Dio et al Mondo di gli errori passati della sua giovinezza, che ricognosci la sua liberazione solo da sua divina Maesta, e che le ne rendeva, humilissime gratie, che le habbia dato tanto spirito in queste sue afflitioni, che non si sia mai punto mossa dal suo fermo proponimento di voler vivere e morir Cattolica, come intende hora de voler far piu che mai."

Collated and signed by L'Archivista, G. Tanfani.

Dal Archivio Mediceo, le 17 Febbrajo, 1840.

In a letter, preserved amongst the Morton MSS. from Sir William Kirkaldy to the Laird of Lochleven, dated June 1st, 1568, there is the following passage.

"Seeing that all thir three taik no effect, this last was tane in hand and executed, devised by the queen's self, George, and the lad Willie, and Cursell was on the counsel, who received all writings, messages, and tokens from Willie sent by George to the queen. I can try no more of your servants to have been on this counsel. * * As to them that came in company with the L. Seton, I need not to tell you their names; but James Wardlaw was the guide, and laid them quietly in the hill, where they might see the going in and out of the boat. When I know farther, ye shall understand it," &c. 1st June, 1568.

No. II.

Battle of Langside, page 43.

The following account of this battle is taken from an original in the State-paper Office, entitled,

"ADVERTISEMENTS OF THE CONFLICT IN SCOTLAND."

[The blanks are left in consequence of the original being in those places injured.]

"16th *May*, 1568.

"The queen's number was six thousand.

"The Earl of Argyle her Lieutenant-General.

"The company of the Lords was esteemed to be four thousand.

"The Hamiltons had the vauntgarde of the queen's part, assisted with others, to the number of two thousand. Both companies did strive for a hill nigh adjoining where they met. Their meeting together was in a strait passage through a village. The Lord Hume, the Lord

Semple, and the Lord Morton, had the vauntgarde on that side. The fight endured, at the least, three quarters of an hour without giving back. The queen's party first gave way, and then pursued¹ . . . at the beginning of which chase Th' Earl of Moray willed and required all his to spare for shedding of more blood. Otherwise as many as were on foot, which were the greatest number, had been in their enemy's will, for the h . . . whereof the Lord Harris was general, fled and . . . within the horses of them that were lighted of the company.

"The queen beheld this conflict within half a mile distant, standing upon a hill, accompanied with Lord Boyd, the Lord Fleming, and the Lord Harris' son, with thirty others, who, seeing the company overthrown, took the way to² [Dumbarton, who was so near pursued that she could not take the boat that should bring her into Dumbarton, but was driven to take the way to Dumfries, where she as yet remaineth.] The estimation of the number that was slain in the place where they fought, by the view of them that have skill, is judged to be six or seven score, besides those have died since being brought into the town, and other places, which daily die. And taken prisoners of that side to the number of 300 and more, whereof the Lord Seton, the Lord Ross, Sir James Hamilton, the Mr. Montgomery, the Mr. Cassillis, the Sheriff of Ayr, the Sheriff of Lithgow who bore the Hamilton's standard in the vantgarde, himself being a Hamilton, the young Laird of Preston, the Laird of Innerwick, the Laird of Pitmilley, and the Laird of Baweirg, Andro Melvin, the Laird of Boyne, and Robert Melvin, Captain Anstruther, the Laird of Trabrowne, two sons to the Bishop of St. Andrews, if one of them not slain, a son to the Abbot of Kylwinnon. The rest of the number that is taken of the three hundred is all of the surname of the Hamiltons and their allya. Alexr. Stewart a captain of footmen slain.

"John Hamilton of Millbourne, Mr. of the household to the Duke, also slain. John Hamilton of Ormiston slain.

"The prisoners for the most part are all put in the castle of Glasgow. Of the Lords' side never a man of name slain. Divers sore hurt. The Lord Hume hurt in the leg and face, and overthrown, and relieved by his own men. The Lord Ochiltree sore hurt and in danger of his life, at the skirmish on horseback in the morning, receiving his chief wound with a sword in his neck, given by the Lord Harris, whose son, in the revenge of his father's hurt, had slain the Lord Seton, had not the Earl of Moray saved him after his being

¹ Sic in original.

² The passage enclosed with [] is scored through in the original.

yielded. Andro Kar of Fawdonside likewise hurt in danger of his life, with divers others gentlemen sore hurt.

“ The Earl of Argyle, even as they were joining, as it is reported, for fault of courage and spirit, swooned. There were divers of the queen’s part taken and not brought in, for there was the father against the son, and brother against brother, as namely, three of the Melvyns of the Lords’ side, and two of the queen’s, which was Robert and Andro. After the fight had long continued, a gentleman of the highland, called Macfarlane, who not xx days before for his misbehaviour was condemned to die, and yet at the suit of the Countess of Moray, had his pardon, and now accompanied with two hundred of his countrymen was a wing to the vauntgarde of th’ east side, and came in and executed great slaughter, by whom the victory was not thought least to be atchieved.

“ The Earl of Huntley was coming to the queen with . . . with great speed, untill . . . got the warst, and then . . . of field pieces of brass there was x, which the Lords also wan. And the Mr. Gunner, with a great piece from the Lords’ side.

“ The day following, being the 14th, the earl sent to summon the castle of Hamilton. The answer respaited till the next morning, and he that had the charge thereof came to Glasgow and offered the keys to the Earl of Moray upon his knees, and said, that if it pleased to send any thither to receive it, he should ; and he answered that he would go himself, and so did, and took it that day himself about 12 hours ; and within few hours afterwards went to Draffen, but how he hath therein prevailed, I yet know not, but shall at the return of those two that I have yet remaining there.

“ The Earl of Athole, notwithstanding his promise made to the lords, neither he nor any of his came. The Laird of Grange had the charge of the horsemen of the Lords’ side, who that day played his part. The French ambassador was either at Hamilton or in the field the day of their meeting. The Earl of Eglinton, being of the queen’s side, bestowed himself in a house, and there covered with straw till the night, and then escaped.

“ The noblemen that were with the queen : the Earl of Argyle, th’ Earl of Eglinton, the Earl of Cassillis’s brother, with his friends. The Earl of Rothes, the Lord Boyd, the Lord Fleming, the L. Levyston, the Lord Seton, the Lord Ross, the Lord Yester, the Lord Borthwick, the Lord Claud, son to the Duke, Sir James Hamilton, . . . the Sheriff of Lithgow, the L. . . and of Garleys, the L. Weemys of Fife, with all the whole force of Galloway and Liddesdale.

“That day the Earl of Moray went to receive the castle of Hamilton ; certain of his horsemen ran a foray, and got many naggs, whereupon the poor people made a great lamentation, and immediately thereupon he caused proclamation to be made that their goods should be delivered again and no spoik to be made.”

No. III.

An Order for Mary's Execution in 1569, page 103.

The following is the letter of Leicester referred to in the text. It was politely communicated to me by John Bruce, Esq. a well-known and able antiquary, and Secretary to the Camden Society. He conjectures that it was written to Secretary Walsingham, but the address does not appear on the letter. It is preserved in a MS. volume belonging to Frederick Ouvry, Esq. by whose permission it is now printed. The volume was written, as Mr. Bruce conjectures, about the beginning of the seventeenth century, and contains transcripts of many letters written by Leicester, from the Low Countries. I have in vain searched for the original of this letter in the State-paper Office. The fact which it mentions, that a great seal was sent for Mary's execution of a sudden, at the time of Northumberland and Westmoreland's rebellion, is, as far as I know, new.

LEICESTER TO ———.

“ 10th October, 1585.

“I have written very earnestly, both to her majesty and my Lord Treasurer, and partly also to yourself and Mr. Vice Chamberlain, for the furtherance of justice in [on] the Queen of Scots ; and believe me if you shall defer it, either for a parliament or a great session, you will hazard her majesty more than ever ; for time to be given is that the traitors and enemies to her will desire.

“Remember, how upon a less cause, how effectually all the council of England once dealt with her majesty *for justice to be done upon that person*, for being suspected and infamed to be consenting with Northumberland and Westmoreland in the rebellion. You *know the Great Seal of England was sent then, and thought just and meet, upon the sudden, for her execution*. Shall now her consent and practice for the destruction of her majesty's person be used with more [regard] to her danger than the less found fault? Surely I tremble at it ; for I do assure myself of a new more desperate attempt if you shall fall to such temporising solemnities ; and her majesty cannot but mislike you all for it ; for who can warrant these villains from her if that

person live, or shall live any time? God forbid ; and be you all stout and resolute in this speedy execution, or be condemned of all the world for ever. It is most certain, if you will have her majesty safe, it must be done ; for justice doth crave it, besides policy. It is the cause I send this poor lame man, who will needs be the messenger for this matter ; he hath bidden such pain and travel here, as you will not believe. A faithful creature he is to her majesty as ever lived. I pray you let her not ¹ retain him still now, even to save his life, for you know the time of the year is past for such a man to be in the field ; yet will he needs be so, and means to return, and you must procure his stay as without my knowledge, or else I lose him for ever ; but if he come hither, it is not like if he can continue ; he deserves as much as any good heart can do—be his good friend I pray you, and so God bless you—Hast—written in my bed upon a cushion, this 10th, early in the morning.

“ Your assured.

“ I pray you let not Candish know I wrote for his stay, but yet procure it in any wise.”

No. IV.

Elizabeth's Plot for the Secret Execution of Mary in Scotland, page 175.

The following are the letters which contain the secret history of Killigrew's mission.

HENRY KILLIGREW TO LORDS BURGHEY AND LEICESTER.

“ *Leith, 14th September, 1572.*

“ May it please your good lordships, I arrived at Berwick the 11th of this present ; and after I had some conference with Mr. Marshal touching my charge, I came to Tantallon, where the Earl Morton had lain sick ten days before. He caused me to stay there all night, by reason whereof many speeches passed, which now for haste I cannot enlarge ; but, in sum, it may please your honour to know, that he assured me, that for his part he was the same man he always professed himself to be, both for the king his master's service, and the doing of all good offices to continue the amity with the queen's majesty, my sovereign ; that he knew of no pensions offered by Monsieur de Croc, nor any practices for conveying the king, etc. La Croc, he seemed not to like, because hitherto he did not acknowledge the king's authority ; but a driver of time in this treaty, which I think will hardly be brought to

¹ Sic. in original, but it seems incorrect. It should be, I think, “ let her retain him still now.”

a good peace without further trouble, for the great jealousy the one party hath that the other meaneth but drift of time. He¹ is the king's lieutenant-general on this side Stirling.

"The news of France doth make them and others startle, and here methinks doth greatly alienate their minds from that king. Where their day of meeting was appointed to be the 10th day of this month, certain of both sides convened together and put it off till the 20th of this month, at which time the regent, and the Earl of Morton, with the king's friends, do meet here in Leith. In this meanwhile, passing towards my Lord Regent to Stirling, I thought good, having met Mr. James Melvin by chance in this town, to let them of the castle know of my coming, and of the cause, and of the charge I have to deliver them as soon as I shall have been with the regent. It seemeth I am not misliked of the other party, and therefore I hope some good will grow, even in the matter I am chiefly sent for, whereof, as soon as I may be able with reason, I shall advertise your honours; and in this meantime, most humbly beseech you to pardon this rude scribbling.

"John Knox is again in Edinburgh; the town guarded; and this also, which is somewhat fortified and in defence, with the king's soldiers. From Leith, this 14th of September, in the morning."

"Your honours' most bounden,

"H. KILLIGREW."

KILLIGREW TO LORDS BURGHELEY AND LEICESTER.

"19th October, 1572, Stirling.

"May it please your good lordships to be advertised. I came hither the 16th of this present, at night, and the next day I was bidden to dinner with the regent, and saw the king, who seemed to me a very toward prince of his age, both in wit and person.

"I pressed my Lord Regent's grace to command some good and reasonable answers to be made unto the form of surety demanded by the Castilians, to the end that this abstinence be not neglected as the other was, without doing any thing for the peace until it was too late; and in this motion I used some speeches to sound his inward liking and devotion to the peace indeed, which I found him to my judgment most desirous thereof: and weary, as it were, in respect of the burden, charge, and trouble, sustained by the regiment, because he findeth not the assistance he looked for, neither at home, nor yet from abroad.

"Touching my motion, his grace said, that he had given order to the Abbot of Dunfermline to deliver me, at my return to Edinburgh, such answer as his grace and the council had caused to be framed to

¹ i. e. Morton.

² State-paper Office.

the Castilian's demanda, the which, he hoped, I should find to be reasonable; and in case there were any thing to their misliking, his grace and the council were contented to be ruled therein by the advice of her majesty, wherein they nothing doubted the care her majesty had, both of the preservation of their young king and his estate. And by occasion of this speech his grace said moreover to me, how he had sent his resolute mind unto my Lord of Morton by the said abbot *touching the great matter*; wherein I found him now very earnest, insomuch that he desired me to write speedily unto both your honours to further the same by all the good means you might, as the best, and as it were, the only salve for the cure of the great sores of this commonwealth. I am also put in good hope of the said abbot that I shall receive a good answer of my Lord of Morton's touching the circumstances, et cetera, which I omit to write till the despatch of my courier, by whom I shall be able to satisfy your honours more at length, having only written thus much, as it were, by the way.

"I perceive the regent's first coldness grew rather for want of skill how to compass so great a matter, than for lack of good-will to execute the same. He desired me also to write unto your honours to be suitors unto her majesty for some relief of money towards the payment of his soldiers, without the which he shall not be able to do his master that service he desireth."

The rest of the letter is unimportant.¹

KILLIGREW TO LORDS BURGHLEY AND LEICESTER,² page 176.

"November 23, 1572.

"My bounden duty most humbly remembered.

"Your honours' letters by Captain Arrington, who brought her majesty's packet, I received the 22d of this present, in the which your honours do earnestly charge me with two great, yea, very great faults—one that I should have passed my commission in the handling of the great cause, the other, for that I showed myself willing to receive so absurd and unreasonable requests as I sent your honours.

"To the first I answer, with all humbleness, under the correction of your good lordships, that whatsoever cause my confounded manner of writing gave your honours so to think, yet if it shall be proved ever hereafter that I used her majesty's name therein, or passed the bounds of my commission, I will never desire more favour of your honours, but rather that ye would do justice upon me to the example of others.

"I forget not, my lords, the great charge her majesty gave me at

¹ State-paper Office.

² Original, State-paper Office.

my coming hither, saying, that no more was privy to this matter but your honours and I, and that if it came forth, the blame should fall thereafter. I could but promise her majesty it should be to me as my life, which I trust I have kept, insomuch that when I was advertised that my Lord Keeper, after his coming to the court, was also made acquainted with the matter, I durst never direct my letters to him, with your lordships, but thought best to leave the same to your wisdoms. And this is absolute to the first point, whatsoever my Cornish English hath occasioned your honours to gather to the contrary, that I never used her majesty's name, or that I would make any motion for them here, but to your honours alone.

"Now, touching the receiving of the Articles, and transcription of them, I did it not without protestation to the Abbot of Dunfermline, how I utterly disliked them, assuring him farther, that I took them not to any other end, but to know of my Lord of Morton, whether they were according to his meaning. Whereupon I remember the abbot replied, alleging certain causes why he thought her majesty would never agree to any such thing, therefore that this was a mean to feel your lordships' judgments, which saying of his I did insert as near as I could remember them in the letter and after the 'Articles.'

"I humbly beseech your honours to consider that this was done at such time as the late regent lay a-dying, which matter and the sequel thereof did so occupy my head and hand, that I was fain to send those Articles with a confused letter, as it were rather to let your honours see the manner of their dealing (whereof I had given warning before in my other letters,) than that I did allow or like of them; and therefore I advertise your honours how I had told my Lord of Morton plainly, that I had not sent them, but only received them of the abbot (who was gone over the water,) to know whether they were as his Lordship meant them—who, taking the copy which I had in my hand to show him, after he had read them, said, that the abbot had missed in something, and desired me not to send the Articles. I answered, he need not desire me, for though he would give me never so much, I would not do it, and in the end made him see that it was rather a mockery than otherwise.

"This your honours may trust to is true, although the time were such then as I could not write all circumstances; and since that time, although I heard some time a glance of the matter, I would never give great ear to it. * * * And truly, my Lords, I was stricken with such sorrow upon the reading of your letters, I was not able since to brook any thing I took for sustenance. * * *

"By your honours' bounden,

"H. KYLLYGREW."¹

¹ State-paper Office.

No. V.

Death of Mar, page 186.

On the day the Regent Mar died at Stirling, namely October 28, 1572, Killigrew the ambassador wrote this letter to the Lords Burghley and Leicester :—

“May it please your good Lordship, I wrote yesterday to Mr. Secretary of the great danger my Lord Regent was in of his life, but since, he having been let blood, is somewhat amended. My Lord of Morton told me the same day that he had received a letter from Alexander Areskine, the regent’s brother, that there was no hope of life in him, and willed him to provide accordingly ; which he did, as your honours shall understand by Captain Arrington, who shall depart hence to-morrow at the farthest, both with their opinions here for the peace, as also *for the matter ye wot of*, which in mine opinion will nothing satisfy your expectation, unless it may be squared and framed to a better and more reasonable proportion, as I think it will upon your answers. I look this night for a man I sent to Stirling, and therefore shall peradventure stay a little the longer, that I may send you perfect word of the regent’s estate. And thus referring all things to Capt. Arrington’s letters, I most humbly take my leave of your honours.¹

“H. KYLLYGREW.”

No. VI.

Death of Grange, page 211.

REGENT MORTON TO KILLIGREW.

“*Holyrood House, Aug. 5, 1573.*

“After my most hearty commendations, I received your letter from Captain Cockburn as I returned from Stirling towards this town upon the 29th of July, wherein I find a loving continuance of your care and gude will towards the amity of thir² countries, and friendship to myself. Of the quhilk³ I heartily thank you.

“Upon Monday the 3d of August, Grange, his brother Mr. James, with Mossman and Cockky, the goldsmiths that made the counterfeit money in the castle, were executed, according to the judgment of the

¹ State-paper Office, Killigrew to Burghley and Leicester, 28th October, 1572.

² These.

³ The which.

law pronounced against them : and further execution is no yet made. What offers were made on Grange's behalf for safety of his life, I send you herewith the copy, which, as you may consider are large, as meikle¹ as possibly might have been offered. Yet, considering what has been, and daily is, spoken by the preachers, that God's plague will not cease quhill² the land be purged of blood, and having regard that such as are interested by the death of their friends, the destruction of their houses, and away taking of their goods, could not be satisfied by any offer made to me in particular, quhilk I accepting, should have been cassin³ in double inconvenience, I deliberated to let justice proceed as it has done. * * *

" I have written to my Lady Lennox, to crave of the Marshal of Berwick, the king my sovereign's jewels that are in his hands, which he is obliged in honour, and by indenture and promise made at the incoming of the queen's majesty's forces, to deliver in my hands to the king's use. It may be that he will use them liberally now at court, and make friends by them. Therefore, I pray you give advice to my Lady Lennox in what order it is best that she handle this matter." ⁴

No. VII.

Attack on Stirling, April 26, 1578, page 245.

A minute and interesting account of the successful attack on Stirling castle, which led to the restoration of Morton to the supreme power in the government, will be found in the following letter from Sir Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley.

BOWES TO BURGHELEY.⁵

" Edinburgh, April 28, 1578.

" May it please your lordship.—On Saturday last, about six in the morning, the Earl of Mar, accompanied with the Abbots of Dryburgh and Cambuskenneth, and their servants ordinarily lodged in the castle of Stirling, came to the castle gate, with pretence to go a-hunting; and finding there the Master and his servants, the abbots called the Master aside, charging him that he had much abused the Earl of Mar, his nephew, and far overseen himself in withholding the custody of the king and castle from the earl. The Master, after reasonable excuse made, found that they pressed to possess the keys, and command the piece; and reaching himself to an halbert, his servants came

¹ As much.

² Until.

³ Thrown.

⁴ State-paper Office.

⁵ Orig. British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 89.

to assist him. Dryburgh and some with him stayed the Master; Cambuskenneth and his complices assaulted the rest; when Buchanan, one of the Master's men, was sore hurt. After the fray pacified, the master and the abbots withdraw themselves to the hall to debate the matter; and Argyle being then a-bed, rose speedily, and came with a small number to the hall, where, hearing that the master and the abbots were in quiet communication, he retired himself to his chamber, and, arming himself, he assembled his servants, that with the Master were able to have overmatched the other. But the master being then fully satisfied, Argyle was likewise soon after appeased; and then yielding possession for the earl, they agreed at length to remove thence, and draw to concord, specially to satisfy the king, who of the tumult, as is reported, was in great fear, and teared his hair, saying the Master was slain. And as I am informed his grace by night hath been by this means so discouraged, as in his sleep he is herewith greatly disquieted. After all this was ended, the Earls of Argyle and Mar, the two abbots and Mr. Buchanan,¹ advertised by their letters this council of this accident; declaring that the parties were well reconciled; and persuaded the council to proceed forwards in the course determined for the government, as no such matter had happened. Argyle departed out of the castle, and he is now gone to levy his forces, meaning to return within two days at the farthest.

“In this uproar, the eldest son of the Master was so crushed in the throng, as he died the next day. The Master is fallen into vehement disease with danger of his life.

“Upon the coming of the said letters from Stirling, on Saturday about nine in the afternoon, the council assembled; and after some hot humours digested, they despatched Montrose that night towards Stirling, to understand, and certify to them the true state of the matter, to persuade quietness about the king's person, and to continue this present government established until the next parliament.

“Montrose, after long abode at the Lord of Livingston's house, came to Stirling in the next day, and was received into the castle. He putteth the council in good hope that the matter is well pacified, and that this government shall not by this accident be impeached. Whereupon the most part of this council, pretending to have the king's letters commanding their repair to him, are departed this day towards Stirling; but what shall ensue hereof is greatly doubted.

“Lochleven being speedily advertised of the doings of the abbots, came the same day to Stirling, and with some difficulty (as outwardly was showed) was let into the castle with one servant, whom

¹ This was the celebrated Buchanan.

presently he returned to Lochleven to the Earl of Morton, and himself remaineth still in the castle. The Earl of Morton, upon the first advertisement, came to Lochleven; despatched his servant to the Earl of Angus, to put all his friends and forces in a readiness on an hour's warning. And many noblemen, being friends to these two earls, have done the like; nevertheless they show no force nor assembly as yet.

"The Lords of the Council have likewise levied all their powers, drawing some part with all possible speed towards Stirling, and leaving the residue in readiness upon warning.

"Some are of opinion, that the council will be readily received and welcomed to the king and to all the castle, without further change; and many think that, by the means of the abbots, the king shall cause them to retire to their own houses, till his pleasure be further known; and in case they disobey the same, then to lay siege and take the castle. That then the king will cause the Earl of Morton and other nobles to levy their power within the realm, to raise the siege, and rescue his person from their violence. What storm shall fall out of these swelling heats doth not yet appear. But I think, verily, and that within two or three days, that it will burst into some open matter, discovering sufficiently the purposes intended; wherein, to my power, I shall seek to quench all violent rages, and persuade unity and concord among them; which, if this sudden chance had not happened, might easily have taken place. Thus referring the rest to the next occasion,

"And with humble duty, &c.

"ROBERT BOWES."

NO. VIII.

Composition between Morton and his Enemies, page 250.

Lord Hunsdon's letter from Berwick to Lord Burghley, referred to in the text, and preserved in the British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 101, gives some interesting particulars of the composition between Morton and his powerful opponents. It is as follows:—

HUNSDON TO BURGHELEY.

"*Berwick, August 19, 1578.*

"My very good Lord, — I will not trouble your lordship with any long discourse touching this matter in Scotland."

Hunsdon then refers Burghley to Mr. Bowes' letter, "who," he says, "has the greatest merit in bringing about peace: otherwise there had been such a slaughter as would not have been appeased in

Scotland these many years,—the malice of the lords and their adherents, especially the wardens of Tevydale and the Merse, and their bands, which was their greatest force against Morton, was so great and so desirous of revenge. They of the Merse made them a standard of blue sarcenet, and in it a child painted within a grate, with this speech out of his mouth, ‘Liberty I crave, and cannot it have.’ They seemed to answer under it, ‘Either you shall have it, or we will die for it ;’ so as, though their malice to Morton was their quarrel indeed, yet they made the detaining of the king their colour.

“My Lord, the queen’s maj : hath now both sides at her devotion, and the party of Athole and Argyle more in show than the king’s ; for the king’s side terms the others Englishmen, because they were contented to put the whole of their causes to her majesty ; which the other lords, being required of Mr. Bowes to do the like, Morton utterly refused the same, saying that the K. and his council would end them. But if Mr. Bowes’ travel; and some other means, had not taken place, it was very like that Morton had been hard bested ; for although the king’s side were something more in number, yet were the others better chosen men, far better horsed and armed, and besides, few of them but, either for their own causes or their friends, bare Morton a deadly hatred and sour desire of revenge, which was but in few of the king’s side against any of the other lords. I pray God her majesty do so deal now, having both sides at her devotion, as she may keep them both ; which surely she may easily do if she will.

“The king hath sent her majesty a cast of Falcons. I would be glad that her majesty would remember him with some token.

“Thus have I troubled, &c. &c. &c.,

“F. HUNSDON.”

No. IX.

Destruction of the House of Hamilton by Morton in 1579, page 259.

The following letter of Captain Nicholas Arrington to Lord Burghley describes his negotiations with the young king, and the deep feeling of hatred and revenge which animated so many of the nobility against the house of Hamilton. It is preserved in the British Museum, Caligula, C. v. fol. 130.

NICHOLAS ARRINGTON TO BURGHLEY.

“Berwick, 10th October, 1579.

“Right Honourable—Having given my attendance, as well at Stirling as at Edinburgh, these twenty-six days, for answer of the

king to such letters and instructions as I had to deliver and deal in from the queen's highness my sovereign with the king there ; and having used my duty and diligence there to my simple knowledge, as well to the king himself as to the whole board and nobility, * * I have now received the king's letters in answer, which I send herewith to your honour, as also a letter to her highness from the Earl of Morton, &c. Yet, in using such conference with his grace, as her majesty's letters and instructions did lead me unto, touching the Hamiltons, I could not find in the king other than fervent hatred against them, and as it were a fear he had of them, if they should remain or inhabit within that realm, to be dangerous to his person. I found the like devotion of the whole nobility there towards them, and not willing to pity their cause ; and thought not only discourtesy in receiving them in England, but as much in soliciting their causes, being so odious murderers to the king's dearest friends ; yet seeming to be grateful of her majesty's good [will] in forewarning the danger that might happen to the king's estate by their banishment into foreign countries, being of so great a house and quality. * * Touching the present state of that country, the king hath not been directly moved by the council, or any number of councillors or noblemen together, for any marriage with any particular person. Yet it is thought that, as there be several factions in that matter, so every one of them seeketh to persuade the K. to marry in that place that may be best for their own purpose ; wherein some look for France, some for Spain, some for Denmark ; and it is said the matter will be offered to the queen shortly, with request to dispose himself such way as shall be found most convenient for his marriage ; and it seems that the K. of his own inclination, best liketh and affecteth to match with England in marriage, in case he may find her majesty favourable to him.

“Touching Monsieur de Aubigny, it appeareth that the king is much delighted with his company, and he is like to win to special favour ; and not only to be Earl of Lennox in reversion, (after the earl present,) but also to have some part of the Hamiltons' lands, if he may be drawn to religion. He hath not, as yet, dealt in any matter of marriage with the king, nor in any matter of great weight, but defers all those things to further time. He means to abide in Scotland this winter. His wife is looked for there, with her younger brother Andracks. He lives in court more than his living will bear, as is thought ; whereupon some judges he is borne with some greater than himself. He hath many followers, as Mr. Henry Kerr and others, that are much suspected ; which they perceive, causing them to be more wary to meddle in any thing as yet.

"This parliament holds at Edinburgh, the 20th of this month, which is thought chiefly for these causes ; for the forfeiture of the Hamiltons and Sir James Balfour ; for the confirmation of all things done in the regents' times during the king's minority ; and for order to be done in the king's house and revenues. The heartburn and hatred betwixt the Earl of Morton and the Kerrs and the Humes, who depend upon Argyle, Montrose, and that fellowship, still continueth.

"The king is generally well loved and obeyed of both sides, and of all the people. Thus craving pardon for my evil scribbling, using more another weapon than the pen, I do commit your honour to the preservation of the Almighty.

"NICHOLAS ARRINGTON."

No. X.

Poisoning of the Earl of Athole, and State of Parties in Scotland.

Page 259.

The two following letters, which are printed from the originals in the Bowes Papers, relate to the state of the country immediately after the death of the Earl of Athole :—

LETTER FROM AN ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENT OF SIR GEORGE
BOWES. Dated, 29th April, 1579.¹

"The Spirit of the Lord Jesus be with you for salutation.

"I wrote to you before, the day and date of the Earl of Athole deid,² quhilk was the 24th of this instant April.

"He was opened and bowelled on Sunday, and it is plainly said he was poisoned, for so they perceive when he was opened. The Earl of Montrose and the Bailie of Arrol is left chief councillors to the Earl of Athole's son, quhilk³ is eighteen years old.

"His father has given him in command to keep friendship with all them that he was in friendship withal before.

"There is great strife and debate quhilk should be chancellor ; but the Earl of Argyle has gotten the grant of it at the king.

"Morton is at Castle Semple with Boyd, and has ane enterprise upon the Hamiltons, at least seems so ; but all is falsett⁴ he means.

"To this effect, Captain Crawford is to take up ane hundred men,

¹ From the Bowes MSS. orig.

² Quhilk—which, for who.

³ Death, which.

⁴ Falsett, falsehood.

and Captain Hume and other hundred; but I think my Lord of Athole's deid shall make them run a new course.

"Ye shall surely know that Athole's fellowship will not leave the common cause; and, therefore, I think ye shall hear of some alteration shortly.

"Our name and the Kerrs is lying at wait what shall be enterprised. I wrote to you before we shall never be Morton's.

"It is thought that Argyle shall take Athole's place plain upon him, and begin where he left; and Montrose will be a spur to the same.

"We are surely informed that the King of Denmark has levied six thousand men to come on Orkney and Shetland: by whose means this is done I wrote to you before in my last letter.

"The Earl of Angus remains at Tantallon.

"The court is very quiet at this time. I pray God preserve our king, for he is in great hazard: for if they begin the Italian fashion in the king's house, what good shall we look for as long as he is there? Surely, I fear me, if he be not gotten out of their hands, they will the like with him. As I hear farther, you shall be advertised.

"Written the 29th April, 1579. Your loving friend,

"4°."

LETTER OF INTELLIGENCE FROM AN ANONYMOUS CORRESPONDENT TO
SIR GEORGE BOWES.

"Sir,—Albeit the time hath been short since your departure, the accidents and mutations in this realm hath not been of small importance. As I wrote to you of before, that the Earl of Athole his sickness was thought to be mortal, so is he now departed this present life, at Kincardine, the 25th of April, not without great suspicion, and a crying out that he was poisoned. And yet I think, with time, that bruit will vanish, notwithstanding that the Lord of Aratully,¹ whose name is Stewart, was by the Earl of Montrose, and the remanent friends that was present when the corpse was opened, sent to the king's majesty, humbly requiring for trial and punishment. To whom his majesty answered,—Gif² that matter were true, it concerned himself for divers respects; and yet, as it were a shame to him to leave the matter untried, and gif need required unpunished,—so were it ane sin to slander any innocent personage: and therefore he would not fail, first to take trial, and thereafter to proceed to punishment.

"The hail³ friends of the dead are convened at Dunkelden on the 3d of May, where the young Earls of Athole and Montrose put in

¹ Grandtully.

² If.

³ Whole.

deliberation what were best way to come by a revenge of this heinous fact.

‘It hath been concluded with that assembly, that not only those which were present should crave justice of this matter at the king’s majesty, but also all the sociats of the Falkirk should be convened to crave the same. Upon this conclusion, a convention of the foresaids is appointed to be at Edinburgh upon the 15th May; but I am of opinion that this their appointed diet shall not hold, in respect of the causes subsequent.

“Upon the 1st May, a matter, before concluded, was put in execution. Letters was directed by the king and council to charge the Lords of Arbroath and Paisley to exhibit their brother, the Earl of Arran, before the king in Stirling, upon the 20th of the said month; which letters was only devised to put the said lords in hope that no further shall proceed against them but by the order aforesaid.

“The Earl of Morton before that time was sent to Dalkeith, the Earl of Angus to Douglas, the Earl of Lennox to Glasgow, the Lord Ruthven to Stirling; all these persons having their forces privately warned upon the 3d of May, marched towards Hamilton and Draffnage, where they made their rendezvous before their setting forward. The twae brether¹ was fled away, and left the house garnished; which are now enclosed, and ready to be given up.

“Immediately after the said lords was upon the fields to press towards Hamilton, when they were certain that no intelligence could prevent their doings, proclamation was sent forth by the king and council, at an hour proclaimed in divers sheriffdoms, to follow the same lords for prosecuting and apprehending of the two foresaid brethren and their complices. * * *

“This sudden and unexpected dealing and proceeding, is like to put such affray in the minds of the associates at Falkirk, that their appointed diet for meeting at Edinburgh shall turn to great uncertainty.

“Besides this, the Lord Seton is charged to appear personally at Stirling, upon the 6th day hereof, to answer *super inquirendis*; where he is, for divers respects, to be committed to ward.

“John Seton, second son to the said lord, arrived in this country upon the 2d of May. He is created *Cavallero de Buca* of the Catholic King of Spain. But I believe this commission shall be of the less efficacy, that his father is now by chance happened in the midst of these troubles. * * By fame nobody is charged with this heinous fact of poison but the Lady Mar, and her brother the comptroller,

¹ The two brothers.

quhilk¹ is thought shall be after trial evanished ; because divers does believe, that this bruit hath rather proceeded upon malice to found ane quarrel upon, nor upon any sure ground. Ye may, by yourself, consider that all these matters tends to this fine,² to bring the king to Edinburgh out of fear. * * The rulers of his affairs and person are looked for to be these : the Earls Morton, Buchan, Argyle, gif³ he will leave the associates, and Montrose in like manner, and the Lord Ruthven. It is thought that *he*, at the king's desire, shall be⁴ accept upon him the office of chancellor ; and failing of that, it is in question betwixt Argyle and Buchan, of thir twae⁵ whay shall be thought meetest by the king and council.

"I write only unto you *nudam et veram historiam*, leaving to your own judgment to discourse what shall follow ; whilk is able enough to do, in respect that all the affairs of this country is better to you known nor by writing can be explained.

"I have had large conference with *he*,⁶ which I cannot at this time commit to writing. It appeareth that he is in part offended with some proceedings, but yet easily mitigate, gif the great word to you known shall be spoken.

"The Flemish painter is in Stirling, in working of the king's portraiture, but expelled forth of the place at the beginning of thir troubles. I am presently travelling to obtain him license to see the king's presence thrice in the day, till the end of his work ; quhilk will be no sooner perfected nor nine days, after the obtaining of this license."

No. XI.

James's Letter to Mary, page 278.

In the State-paper Office, there is an original letter of the young king, written at this time to his mother the captive queen. Mary had sent him a ring ; and the little ape which appears in the postscript, whose fidelity he so much commends, was perhaps also a present from her.

The letter of James is as follows :—

¹ Quhilk, which.

² Fine, end.

³ Gif, if.

⁴ So in the original. The writer had meant to score out *be*, but forgot.

⁵ Thir twae, these two.

⁶ Morton is here meant, I think. What the "*great word*" was which the writer thinks would operate like a talisman on this proud and able peer, is not easily discovered.

JAMES VI. TO MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.¹

“ Je vous supplie tres humblement de croire que ce n’a point este de ma bonne vollontè que vostre secretaire s’en soit retorne sens quil m’aye donne vostre lettre, et faict entendre ce que luy avies commende de me dire ayant treu beaucoup de regret de ce qui sen est passè, car je serois infiniment fache que long crust que je ne vous voulu se porter l’honneur et le devoir que je vous doibs, ayant esperense que avecque le temps Dieu me fera grace de vous faire prendre de ma bonne et affectionnè amytee, sachent asses qu’apres luy tout l’honneur qu’ay ence monde, je le tiens de vous.

“ Je resceu la bague quil vous a pleu m’envoyer laquelle je garderay bien pour l’honneur de vous. Et vous en envoye une aultre, que je vous supplie treshumblement de vouloir resevoir daussy bon cueur comme je resceue la vostre. Vous m’aves bien faict paroistre par les avertisemens quil vous a pleu me faire par vos dernieres lettres, combien vous metes bonne mere. Vous supplient treshumblement que sy en endendes davantage de men advertir pour y mettre ordre le mieulx quil me sera possible, aquoy je desja commense ainsi quen-tendres par le Compte de Lenox, vous supplient de m’y estre aydente et de me donner vostre bon conseil et advis lequel je veulx ensuyire a celle. De vous rendre plus certaine quen toute chose on il vous plaira de me commender vous me trouverez toujours vostre tres obeissant filz. Vous baisent tres humblement les mains prient Dieu, &c.

“ Vostre obeissant Filz a jamais,

“ JACQUES R.²

“ Madame, je vous recommande la Fidelité de mon petit singe qui ne bouge daupres de moy, par lequel me manderes souvent de noz nouvelles.

“ A la Royne D’Ecosse,

“ Ma tres Honores Dame.”

No. XII.

Randolph’s Negotiation in Scotland, and Elizabeth’s Attempt to save Morton, page 290.

The following letter of Randolph to Walsingham, written immediately before his leaving that country, after his unsuccessful attempt

¹ January 29, 1580-1.

² This signature and the postscript are written in the young king’s own hand.

to save Morton, and the abstract from his original account of his negotiation upon this subject, contain many interesting particulars, too detailed and minute for a general history.

RANDOLPH TO WALSINGHAM.¹

“ May it please your honour.—There is so much matter fallen out against Morton, as I am credibly informed, by the confession of Whittingham, brother to Archibald Douglas, George Fleck, Andrew Nesbit, John Reid, and Saunders Jerdan, that it is thought nothing can now save his life. The king’s self is so vehement against him, and not one counsellor that dare open his mouth for him. All men are appalled ; courage and stomach quite overthrown. His enemies pursue these matters hot against him, and his friends able to do him no good. Neither can I yet be particularly informed of the matters they have against him. I think his days will not be long here ; and yet have I wrought for him, and yet do for him, as for mine own self. The good course that was intended for meeting of commissioners is now smally accounted of ; alleging now that nothing less was intended than that Morton’s case should be committed to treaty. Your honour hath now both to consider and advise what is to be done, and that with all expedition.

“ * * I have been here so well dealt with, that, besides the libel set upon my lodging’s door on Wednesday last, I had a shot bestowed on the window of my chamber, in the place where I am wont to sit and write. My good hap was to be away when it was shot, otherwise either Milles or I had been past writing ; for the piece being charged with two bullets, struck the wall opposite before me, and behind him, where I am accustomed to sit, the table between us. Some show of search is made for fashion’s sake. The rest I have written to my Lord Hunsdon, &c. And so. * * Edinburgh, 25th March, 1581.

“ T. R.”

MR. RANDOLPH’S NEGOTIATION IN SCOTLAND.²

“ 17th January, R. took his journey into Scotland from Berwick.

“ By the way, he received word of Morton’s being removed from Edinburgh castle to Dunbarton castle, which made him hasten forward. Next day after his arrival, he had an audience of the king. The king promised Morton should be put to his trial.

¹ Orig. March 25, 1581.

² The original paper, of which this is an abstract, appears to me to be in the handwriting of one of Walsingham’s clerks.

“ 2d Audience, 21st January.—The king promised that nothing should be done against Morton, without open trial and lawful favour. About this time came the bruit of her majesty's forces about the borders; this gave him [Randolph] greater boldness to proceed both with the king and against D'Aubigny.

“ 3d Audience, 25th January.—R. charged some of the Scottish council with breaking the amity, especially Lennox; and produced two intercepted letters written by the B. of Glasgow. Lennox warmly defended himself. He gave copies of the letters, and demanded a speedy reply. All this time the report of the forces on the borders continued.

“ 4th Audience, 30th January.—The king begged to hear any further matter against Lennox. After this the ambassador began to deal according to the third part of his instructions; to deal with such of the nobility as came unto him; to represent the hazard to the king's person, and the danger to themselves, (intending to make out a party in this way, fit to join with her majesty's forces.) At first he had good hope; but finding that, day by day, the king grew more affectionate to the one and aggravated against the other, they all began to fail; and ‘no man seemed willing either to enterprise it himself, or join with others in this action.’ As these things were thus underhand in brewing, the king sent his answer by a clerk of the council.

“ 1st, That Morton's trial was delayed for want of Archibald Douglas.

“ 2d, The matter against Lennox seemed to be forged.

“ After this, the king assembled the general estates of the realm, the matter being weighty, on the 20th February. The interval gave R. time to labour privately with the nobility, representing the greatness of Aubigny, his offences against Elizabeth, and the danger to themselves. He also, in a private access to the king, laid before him his estate at large: the king took all well.

“ All this time the Earl of Lennox made private means to speak with Randolph, standing still upon his purgation, which (being so commanded) he still resisted, which, notwithstanding grieved him [Randolph] much, as he understood a reconciliation was about to be wrought between Lennox and Morton, and the king approved of it; and was to have gone to Glasgow the better to contrive the matter; ‘albeit that purpose took not effect; for Morton's friends, esteeming this course dishonourable, broke it off.’

“ It was next determined to send Lord Seton from the king to her maj.

“ This staid by Randolph.

“The bruit of the gathering of English forces on the borders continuing, it was determined to appoint a lieutenant and 12 captains, with commissions to levy 120 men.

“All this time, as matters grew worse, Mr. Randolph omitted not underhand to procure a party, labouring by all means to make Morton’s case fearful unto them, and the greatness of Lennox odious; alluring them by promises of Elizabeth’s support. Notwithstanding all, *vel prece vel pretio*, though many seemed *forward*, no man would be *foremost*, — no assurance could be had except on Angus, Mar, and Glencairn. They said also, there was a want of sufficient proof of the matters with which Lennox was charged withal.

“On the other hand, the friends of Lennox were not idle, and made a great impression, urging, that Elizabeth’s injustice and severity against an innocent man, showed she had more in view than the trial of Morton and the dismissal of D’Aubigny.

“At last the 20th February, the day of the convention, arrived. R. before it had a private conference with the king, and he obtained an audience of the whole assembly on the 24th February, when he repeated all his message and arguments, — showed all that the queen had done for the realm and the king, in a speech of almost two hours’ length, — added some further matter against D’Aubigny contained in Ross’s letter, and so left the Parliament House. D’Aubigny at that assembly said nothing.

“To this assembly came Angus, with his friends, having all the time before kept himself aloof, (he had assurance from the king,) spending the day within doors, and the night in the fields, for fear of his enemies: but as it fortune, his abode was not long in Edinburgh; for being secretly advised of certain practices intended against him by the Earl of Montrose and his own wife, upon the intercepting of certain letters passed between them, suddenly, in the night, he departed the town unto Dalkeith; where, finding his wife, and after speech with her, he in due time prevented the mischief, acquainted the king with the matter dealing by Mar, who abode still in court, and sent her away home unto her father.¹

“The convention held not long. It was agreed, if war came from England, 40,000 L. Scots should be advanced by the barons and boroughs. Every day bred a new disorder. The bruit of wars grew stronger, — men stirring in all parts, — the ambassador grew odious and his death suspected, and the court in a manner desperate. For all this, he forbore not to call for his answer: the council was perplexed, and Lennox still stood up to his justification.

¹ Her father was Mar.

“Morton abode still at Dunbarton, straitlier kept than before, (although his larger liberty was craved by the ambassador.) Angus absented himself from the court; and being suspected of dealing with the ambassador, made Lennox, Montrose, and Argyle, and that party, stand on their guard. The party from the first got up by the ambassador yet hung in doubt; but Angus was weakened by the late accident. Montrose and Rothes became his deadly enemies, and all went wrong.

“8th March. The answer so long in framing was at last given by the king. It was stated in it, that all griefs and jealousies should be healed by a meeting of *commissioners* on the frontiers. During the time that this answer was a framing, the ministers who continually in their sermons preached against the disorders of the court, to prevent the wrath of God, that now seemed to be imminent, published a general fast, to be held through the realm from the *first* Sunday in March to the *second* of the same. This promised meeting of commissioners on the borders might have been to good purpose, had it not been for the discovery of the practices between Angus and the ambassador, by Angus and Morton’s own servants, which caused the ambassador to be greatly suspected and disliked. Whereupon all persons were examined that resorted to him; viz. George Fleck, the Laird of Mains, the Laird of Spot, John Reid, and Whittingham,¹ all servants and nearest kinsmen to Morton and Angus. Angus himself was banished beyond the Spey. He laboured, notwithstanding, by conference with the clans, his friends Glencairn, Boyd, Lochleven, Clanquill, Dryburgh, and Drumquhassel, to combine together a sufficient party to join with her majesty’s forces on the borders; and might have wrought good effect, had not their own trustiest servants betrayed them, overthrowing all their purposes, to the great danger of themselves and Mr. Randolph. The faithless and traitorous dealing of Whittingham was most noted, like a deep dissembler and fearful wretch. From the beginning, having had the handling and knowledge of all matters of importance and secrecy between Angus and the rest, in the end, without compulsion, by a voluntary confession, he discovered their whole proceedings, not regarding his nearness of blood, or bond of duty, to the Earls of Angus and Morton, or the danger he threw the other noblemen into. This man’s treachery made Angus be put to the horn, and the ambassador ill handled. The king upon this intending to acquaint Elizabeth with the result of the confessions by an envoy, and proceeding with greater severity against Angus, Morton, and Mar. Randolph, finding his longer abode useless, and dangerous to himself,

¹ Douglas of Whittingham.

retired to Berwick, there to await her majesty's further orders. Within two days a gentleman from Angus and Mar came to him to declare their state, and wishing to know when and where they were to await his coming. But finding their party not sufficiently strong nor trustworthy, it was thought imprudent to hazard the advance of her majesty's forces; and so the messenger was dismissed. Thus were they deserted. In the meantime, news came daily of their proscription, and seizing their houses, summoning of Stirling castle held by Mar, fortifying Leith; at last they heard that Mar was reconciled, and Angus left alone. Such being the state of matters, it was thought best to discharge her majesty's forces, to remain in these terms of *divorce*, and to call Mr. Randolph home."¹

It appears, in the above account of Randolph's negotiation, although I have not given the passage in the abstract, that at one time there was a proposal for a reconciliation between Lennox and Morton, on conditions which the king approved of. The following paper shows that these conditions were of the most severe nature, imprisonment for life being the first:—

CONDITIONS OFFERED BY THE KING TO MORTON AND ARCHIBALD
DOUGLAS.—16th May.

“Angus to move his uncle—

- “1. That he shall be confined for life.
- “2. That the Earl of Morton and A. D.² shall renounce all actions for goods taken from them since 29th December last.
- “3. That he shall give up Dalkeith to the king for ever.
- “4. Renounce his right to the castle of Blackness, and sheriffship and lands of Linlithgow, to the king.
- “5. Give up the office of Admiralty and sheriffship of Lothian to the king.
- “6. Cause his base son, James prior of Pluscardine, give the priory to Lord Seton.
- “7. Pay the whole charges of the soldiers levied since last December.
- “8. Pay to the king a 100 stone weight of bullion, coined without warrant during his regency.”

¹ Original, May 6.

² Archibald Douglas.

No. XIII.

Letters on the Troubles, Trial, and Death of the Regent Morton.

Page 281.

The following interesting letters, relative to the troubles, trial, and death of the Regent Morton, are taken from the originals, preserved in the Harleian Collection in the British Museum. The volume of the Harleian is No. 6999, to which my attention was drawn by the Rev. Joseph Stevenson.

SIR R. BOWES TO LORD BURGHLEY AND SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM.
January 7, 1580-1.

“ It may please your good Lordship and your Honour. Yesterday Mr. Archibald Douglas came out of Tyvedale hither, openly to Berwick, to seek her majesty's relief to the Earl of Morton in his present distress, and her highness' succour to himself. * * *

“ He had offered himself for trial, if they would give him a fair trial, and exempt him from the torture which was threatened ; but finding his house seized, and his goods and papers seized, he had fled to Berwick. * * *

“ My servant, lately addressed into Scotland to learn the certainty of these new accidents, returned yesternight, giving me to understand, that on Saturday the last of December, as before hath been signified, Captain James Stewart, with the privity and especial commandment of the king, and in the council-chamber, in the presence of the king and that council, accused the Earl of Morton for the murder of the king's father ; not opening particularly at that time any other offence against him, as once was intended, and as is pretended to be done hereafter. After large discourse made by the earl for his own acquittal, he concluded, and with such sharp words against the captain his accuser, as, the captain returning to him like and bitter terms, they were ready to pass to blows, which was chiefly stayed by the Lords Lindsay and Cathcart ; and the Earl was removed into the chapel to his own servants, and the captain put out at the other door to the gardens ; others that waited there in great numbers, looked for the beginning of the broil. Albeit many friends and servants of the earl, being a great strength, and able to have delivered him at his pleasure, persuaded the earl to put himself in safety ; yet he refused to tarry with them, and returned to the council. And James Stewart,

understanding of his presence there, rushed in again, whereupon a new scuffle begun, that was likewise stayed by the lords aforesaid; and hereupon all the earl's servants and friends were commanded, upon pain of treason, to depart, and whereunto the earl commanded them to obey.

"The Earl of Argyle, Lord Chancellor, (the chief instrument against Morton,) asked the Earl of Angus, then sitting in council with them, what should be done; but Angus alleging that the matter did so narrowly touch and concern him, as he would not vote therein. Likewise the Earl of Lennox refused to vote. At length the Earl of Eglinton persuaded that the king's advocate and council might be conferred withal; which advocate being ready, affirmed, that upon such accusations of treasons, the party accused ought to be committed to sure custody, and afterwards tried as to the laws and case should appertain. Whereupon the Earl of Morton was committed to a chamber in Holyrood House, and there kept until the next Monday, on which he was conveyed to the castle of Edinburgh, where he remaineth. The town of Edinburgh, and many others, offered liberally for his delivery; nevertheless, he always refused to be delivered in any sort, other than by the order of the laws. Mr. John Craig, in his sermon on the Sunday following, did, upon the leading of his text, inveigh greatly *against false accusations*. Whereupon Captain James Stewart, as it is informed for truth, threatened him with his dagger drawn, charging him to forbear to touch him, or otherwise he should receive his reward. * * The Lord Boyd, accused also for the murder of the king's father, is summoned to appear, and not yet comed.

"It is said Sir James Balfour had come out of France. * * * It is now thought as dangerous in Scotland to confer with an Englishman, as to rub on the infected with the plague. * * *

"ROBERT BOWES."

RANDOLPH TO LORDS HUNSDON AND HUNTINGDON.¹

"*Edinburgh, 16th March, 1580-1.*

The first portion of the letter is unimportant. He then proceeds as follows:—

"Angus's intent I know not. Yesterday it was determined in council he should be commanded to ward beyond the river of Spey. Carmichael, and the Prior, and Mains, are commanded not to come at Angus, on pain of forfeiture of their goods, *ipso facto*; and means

¹ Harleian, 6999.

is made to apprehend them, but yet none of them are taken. The Laird of Whittingham is boasted to wear the boots, but I hear it will not be so. Spot hath had a sight of them, as I hear. * * All the court is set on mischief. Captain Stewart taketh upon him as a prince, and no man so forward as he. I spake, on Tuesday, long with the king. There passed nothing on his part from him, but very good speeches of her majesty, which I exhorted him to show forth in actions and in deed. He promiseth much if the meeting of the commissioners be. I charged more his council than himself of the unkindness lately showed unto the Q. my mistress, that no one point of her requests could be yielded, specially for the Earl of Morton, that was, [not] so much as his liberty upon sufficient caution, until the day were appointed for his trial, might be granted. Whereat he fell again in speech of Mr. Archibald Douglas; and I answered him with partial dealings, and favour showed to Sir James Balfour. I told him in what house he lieth in, between the church and castle, upon the right hand. I told who had spoken with him,—Lennox, Seton, and others; and that means would be made shortly to bring him into his own presence. I spake again of the *band in the green box*, containing the names of all the chief persons consenting to the king's murder, which Sir James either hath or can tell of. I told him that I heard daily of new men apprehended, examined, and boasted with the boots, to find matter against the Earl of Morton; and he that was privy to the murder, and in whose house the king was killed, and was therefore condemned by parliament, was suffered to live unpunished and untouched, in his chief and principal town."

* * Randolph then states that he asked leave to depart from Scotland, adding, that after another farewell interview with the king, he hoped, "it would be the last that he ever should have to do with that king and council." "I have again this day spoken with Angus's trusty friend, who gave me some notes touching the bands, and is gone unto him. I have given therein my advice. What will be farther done I know not; but sure I am Angus will not obey the charge for putting himself in ward. * * * George Fleck had yesternight the boots, and is said to have confessed that the Earl of Morton was privy to the poisoning of the Earl of Athole, whereon they have sent for the Earl of Morton's chamberlain, Sandy Jerdan, from Dunbarton. They have also in hand Sandy ———, George Fleck's servant, whom they suppose to know many of Morton's secrets, &c.—Your L.

"THOMAS RANDOLPH."

RANDOLPH TO LORD HUNSDON.

"March 20, 1580-1.

"Whatsoever was intended by my Lord Angus is discovered by the voluntary confession of the Laird of Whittingham, that hath left nothing unspoken that he knew against any man, and much more than any man would have done upon so small occasion at all to say any thing, being neither offered the boots, nor other kind of torment. The ministers have seen it, and in their sermons give God great thanks therefor.

"The enterprise should have been (as they say) to have taken the house where the king lieth, by forged keys, and intelligence by some within; to have slain the Earl of Lennox, Montrose, and Argyle; and to have possessed themselves of the king to have sent him into England. Albeit, these things have so small appearance of truth to have been intended indeed, as, for mine own part, I mean to suspend my judgment thereof till further trial be had." "He hath also confessed that he was here, with the Earl of Angus, at my lodging, and what passed between us. * * I think it will fall out that George Fleck hath played as honest a part against his master, as Whittingham hath done for the Earl of Angus, for he hath been so sore booted. But his legs serve him well enough to walk up and down, which I know to be true.

"*Poor Sandy Jerdan* came yesterday to this town, from Dunbarton, and is lodged near to the court: one on whom the burden is laid to have ministered the bread and drink that poisoned Athole. So accused by Affleck. What is done to him I know not.

"The suspicion of this poisoning of the Earl of Athole is thought to be great, for that it is said John Provend bought it. And he is fled thereupon, no man knowing where he is. * * * Robert Semple, for the making of a ballad, is taken and put in prison. Robert Lekprevik, for the printing thereof, is also fled, but not found. * * * *

"THOMAS RANDOLPH."

SIR JOHN FOSTER TO SIR F. WALSHINGHAM.¹

"Pleasit your Honour to be advertised, that this day a man of mine, whom I sent into Scotland about certain business, is returned unto me with certain news, whereof I think my Lord of Hunsdon

¹ Original, June 4, 1581, Alnwick.

hath already written unto you ; but, notwithstanding, I thought I could do no less but advertise your honour thereof : that is, of the death of the Earl of Morton, who was convicted on Thursday, and adjudged to be hanged, drawn, and quartered on Friday. And there was twenty-two articles put against him ; but there was none that hurt him but the murder of the king, which was laid unto him by four or five sundry witnesses. The first is the Lord Bothwell's testament ; the second, Mr. Archibald Douglas, when he was his man. Mr. Archibald Douglas's man is the accuser of him, that bare a barrel of powder to the blowing up of the king into the air ; and that, for haste to come away, the said Mr. Archibald Douglas left one of his pantafles at the house end. And, moreover, he was convicted for the speaking with the Lord Bothwell after his banishment in England before the king's murder, and then the consenting to the murdering of the king, and the binding his band of manrent to the said Lord Bothwell to defend him, and no person to be excepted ; and the queen's confession, when she was taken at Carberrie Hill : she said he was the principal man that was the deed doer and the drawer of that purpose. Thus, having none other news worthy of advertisement to send unto your honour at this time, I humbly take my leave, at my house, nigh Alnwick, this 4th June, 1581.

“ JOHN FOSTER.”

“ P.S.—The man that brought me these news came from Edinburgh on Friday last, at two of the clock, and then the said Earl of Morton was standing on the scaffold, and it is thought the accusations that were laid against him were very slender, and that he died very stoutly.”

No. XIV.

Scottish Preaching in 1582. John Durie's Sermon, page 310.

The sermon of Mr. John Durie, alluded to in the text, is particularly described in the following extract from a letter of Sir Henry Woddrington to Sir Francis Walsingham. It is preserved in the British Museum, Caligula, C. vii. fol. 7, and dated 26th May, 1582.

WODDRINGTON TO WALSHINGHAM.

“ Upon Wednesday, being the 23d inst. Mr. John Durie preached in the Cathedral Church of Edinburgh, where divers noblemen were present, the effect thereof tending to the reproof of the Bishop of

Glasgow, as plainly terming him an apostate and mansworn traitor to God and his church. And that even as the Scribes and Pharisees could find none so meet to betray Christ as one of his own school and disciples, even so this duke, with the rest of the faction, cannot find so meet an instrument to subvert the religion planted in Scotland as one of their own number, one of their own brethren, and one nourished among their own bowels, who likewise touched the virtuous bringing up of the king, fearing now they have some device to withdraw him from the true fear of God, and to follow the devices and inventions of men, affirming that he was moved to think so, for that he saw all that were manifestly known to be enemies to the church and religion to be nearest unto his person, and others that were favourers and maintainers thereof put off the court, or to have small countenance there showed them. And likewise, he touched the present sent by the Duke of Guise to the king in these manner of speeches :—‘ I pray you what should move Guise, that bloody persecutor and enemy unto all truth, that pillar of the pope, to send this present by one of his trustiest servants unto our king? Not for any love: no, no, his pretence is known. And I beseech the Lord the church of Scotland feel it not oversoon. The king’s majesty was persuaded not to receive it; for why? What amity or friendship can we look for at his hands, who hath been the bloodiest persecutor of the professors of the truth in all France? Neither was there ever any notable murder or havock of God’s people at any time in all France but he was at it in person; and yet for all this, the duke and Arran will needs have our king to take a present from him. If God did threaten the captivity and spoil of Jerusalem because that their king, Hezekiah, did receive a letter and present from the King of Babylon, shall we think to be free committing the like, or rather worse? And because you, my lords, which both do see me, and even at this present hears me,—I say, because you shall not be hereafter excusable,—I tell it you with tears. I feel such confusion to be like to ensue that I fear me will be the subversion and ruin of the preaching of God’s Evangile here in the church of Scotland. I am the more plain with you, because I know there is some of you in the same action with the rest. I know I shall be called to an account for these words here spoken; but let them do with this carcass of mine what they will, for I know my soul is in the hands of the Lord, and, therefore, I will speak, and that to your condemnation, unless you speedily return.’ And then, in the prayers made, he prayed unto the Lord, either to convert or confound the duke. The sermon was very long, godly, and plain, to the great comfort and rejoice of the most number that heard it or do hear of it.”

No. XV.

Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, written immediately previous to the Raid of Ruthven.—15th August, 1582.—page 318.

The minute and accurate information of Bowes, communicated to Walsingham and the faction of the Protestant lords, which led to the enterprise termed the Raid of Ruthven, is proved by the following extract from a letter of Sir Robert Bowes to Walsingham, dated Durham, 15th August, 1582:—

BOWES TO WALSINGHAM.

“* * * I am informed the duke intendeth to persuade the king’s majesty to commit to ward the Earls of Glencairn and Mar, the Lord Lindsay and Boyd, and sundry others, best affected in religion, and loving the amity aforesaid; and also afterwards to hasten the death of the principals of them, whom I hear that he will not pursue for the death of David the Italian, (as from France ye have been advertised,) but rather to charge them with late matter and conspiracy intended, and to have been put in execution by them and their complices in the last month of July against the king and himself. And in case the information given me be true, then there is a secret intention and practice in device,—that after the execution of such principal persons in Scotland as would be most ready to defend religion, and the apprehension and safe custody of others known to be chiefly devoted that way, the alteration of that state in Scotland should be attempted: and the matter to reach into England so far, and with such speed as the [confederates] who practice could perform. The truth and secret herein may be best learned in France, I think, from whence the device and direction for the execution is said to come. The variance between the Duke and the Earl of Gowrie,—the progress of the matter against the new bishop of Glasgow, both entreated in Edinburgh,—the labour of the duke to win nobles and gentlemen to enter into friendship and band with him,—the purpose of some persons in Scotland to proceed in the provision of remedy against the dangerous course presently holden there,—with all other intelligence and occurrences in that state and realm * * are so sufficiently signified to you, as I need not trouble you with needless repetition.”

The conspiracy with which Lennox meant to charge the Protestant party alluded to in the above letter of Bowes, must be the same as

that mentioned by Sir Henry Woddrington in a letter addressed (as I think) to Walsingham some time before this, dated 19th July, 1582. After stating that the king was with the duke at St. Johnston, he observed, that "the ministers had accused the duke of supporting the Bishop of Glasgow, who was excommunicated." He then adds, "The duke is about to charge them with the late conspiracy and practice, wherein they were about to have procured him to have been shot and slain." * *

No. XVI.

Archibald Douglas to Randolph.—page 329.

It is stated in the text, that, on the successful issue of the Raid of Ruthven, the notorious Archibald Douglas wrote from London an exulting letter to his old friend, Randolph. The original is in the State-paper Office, endorsed by Randolph himself "*Mr. Nemo.*" It is spirited and characteristic :—

ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS TO RANDOLPH.—12th September, 1582, London.

"Sir,—from Scotland, by letters, I am advertised, that the duke being in Edinburgh with some few lords, he made choice of Herries and Newbottle to send the king, and lords with his majesty, some offers, which were all rejected.

"The said lords returned to Edinburgh accompanied with Cessford and Coldingknowes, who gave the duke a charge to render the castle of Dunbarton to the Earl of Mar, in name of the king ; to avoid the town of Edinburgh, and retire himself to Dalkeith or Aberdour, in private manner, there to await the king's farther pleasure. The duke seeming to obey the charge, made him as he would ride to Dalkeith ; but in the midway he turned, and is fled to Dunbarton, where I think, he shall not make great cheer, if he render not that castle shortly.

"The king will hold his convention at Edinburgh upon the 15th day hereof ; to the which the duke is charged to compear ; but I think he shall not obey. When law has given the stroke against him I believe ye shall hear news of his escaping. Your special good friend, the Earl of Arran, for the singular and constant affection he bears to the duke, offers to accuse him of high treason, if they will spare his life to serve and assist the party that is with the king. Pity it were that he should not be well used in respect of his rare

qualities natural, beautified with his virtuous education in moral philosophy ; wherein he has so well profited, that his behaviour is marvellous, specially in treating of ambassadors ; which makes me to believe that your worship, as one honoured with that dignity, will interpone some special request in his favours. If ye be disposed so to do, I will take the pains to be your messenger, for the safe conveying thereof to her majesty's ministers in Scotland.

"Your physic, ministered at your late being in that realm, begins now to be of so mighty operation, that banished men are like to have place to seek trial of their innocency, or else, I think, very shortly it shall be hard to discern the subject from the traitor. From such a market ye may think that I shall not be long absent. I am to take my journey towards that country shortly. If your sorel horse's price be so low as a poor banished man's money may amount unto it, I pray you send him hither, and I will pay what price ye set upon him, so it be reasonable. And so, &c.

"London, this 12th of September.

"A. DOUGLAS."

No. XVII.

The Duke of Lennox's last Letter to the King of Scots, page 336.

This letter is preserved in the State-paper Office, in a copy of the time, endorsed by Burghley, "From the Duke of Lennox to the Scottish King from Dunbarton, 16th December, 1582." It is as follows :—

"Sire,—Je me rescens le plus malheureux homme du monde, de voir la mauvaise opinion que vostre majeste a prise de moy, et de ce que la persuasion de ceux, qui sont aupres de vous maintenant, vous ont fait croire, que j'avois aultre intention que de vous rendre l'obeissance et la fidelité que je vous doibs. Croyez je vous supplie tres humblement, que ces motz d'inconstance et desloyaulté que me mandes dans vostre lettre qu'ay laissé gagner a mes ennemis sur moy, m'ont raporté une grande crevecœur. Car je n'eusse jamais pensé que vostre majeste m'eust voulu écrire telz mots, et je me prie a Dieu que tous ceulx qui vous serve, et se disent vos fideles serviteurs, vous serve avec aultant d'affection et de fidelité comme jay le fait, pendant que jay eu ceste honneur d'estre a vostre service.

"Sire,—Je ne crains nullement deestre accusé d'inconstance et de desloyaulté. C'est chose jamais remarque' en moy, mais si l'on me veult accuser d'avoir faict une tasche a mon honneur pour vous obeir,

il faut bien que je l'avoue, car il est tres veritable, et me senible que l'engagement de mon dicte honneur vous doibt assez rendre le preuve de ma dict obeissance et fidelité.

“ Ce m'est ung piteux reconfort a mon partement, que apres avoir receu le dur traictment que j'ay receu, et endure les paines, et tormens et ennuis ; qu'ay endure depuis trois ans, pour m'estre affectionné a vostre service, en vous servent fidelement (comme jay faict) que de voir vostre majeste indigne contre moy, pour seulement avoir evite le danger qui me pouvoit avenir, et laquelle peuestre avoit este conclu sans vostre sceu, sous ombre que les Comptes d'Angus et de Mar n'avoient pas signé l'asseurance, dont la procuration de dict Mar peut donner asses tesmoignage. Et pense que si tout chose soit bien rechercheé que [vous] trouverez que comme il estoit entre Falkirk et Callender, qu'il y en a eu de sa troupe, que luy donnera conseil de m'enfermer au dict Callender, et d'envoyer querir a le dict Angus, ce qu'ayant entendu, voyant qu'il n'y avoit pas ung des seigneurs n'y gentilhommes aryves a Lythgon, le Mardy a six heures de soir, excepte Laird de Wachton et les serviteurs et amis de Mons^r. de Leviston, pour la seurte de ma vie, laquelle je scay estre rechercheé par eulx, je me suis seulement retire en ce lieu, en attendant que vostre majeste donnast ordre que je puisse passer seurement, et ce qui vous avoit demandé de passer par Carleill, estoit parce que ce chemin la m'estoit beaucoup plus seur que celui de Barwick. Mais puis que c'est vostre volonté que je prenne ce chemin la je vous obeiray, et suyvant vostre commandement je partiray Mardy de ce lieu et m'en iray coucher a Glasgow, le Mecredy a Callender, en Jeudy a Dalkeith, et Vendredy a Dunbar, et si mes hardes que je suis contraint de faire faire a Lislebourg, me soyent apportees le jour la, je ne faudray d'estre le lendemain a Barwick, et ou elles me pourront estre apportees. Je vous supplie tres humblement, de me permettre de les attendre au dict Dunbar, et de me vouloir faire envoyer a Dalkeith tout ce que m'avez promis, par le dict Maistre George Young, et aussi de mander ung gentilhomme de me venir rencontrer que le dict Maistre George mande a vostre majeste, lequel vous yra trouver puis qu'il m'a veu party de — a fin de vous asseurer de l'obeissance que je vous vouley rendre.—Priant Dieu, sire, qu'il vous ayt en sa sauve garde. De Dunbarton, 16 de Decembre, 1582.

“ De vostre majeste,

“ Le tres humble et fidele serviteur,

“ LENNOX.”

No. XVIII.

The King's Recovery of his Liberty in 1583, page 356.

In the month of May, 1583, when James was pondering on the plot for the recovery of his liberty, and his escape from the thralldom in which he was kept by the Ruthven lords, there occurs a remarkable letter written by Fowler to Walsingham, which shows that the young king had first disclosed his secret intentions to the Master of Glamis. This is strange enough ; for Glamis, as we have seen, (*supra*, p. 321,) was one of the leaders of the "Raid of Ruthven." The letter is as follows.—It is preserved in British Museum, Caligula, C. vii. fol. 148 :—

FOWLER TO WALSHINGHAM.

"*May, 1583.*

"MY LORD, — After my most humble commendations and service, I do send your honour such proofs of my fidelity, that your honour may thereby well judge of my true meaning. The king hath entered in conference with the Master of Glamis after this sort :—' I intend to go in progress, and first to Falkland, and thereafter to the Glamis. What think you, Master,—shall I be welcome?' The other answered that his welcome should be better than his majesty's entertainment ; because, saith he, ' I am less able now than I was these five years before :' meaning of his loss and fine of xx. thousand pounds, which he paid, by the Duke of Lennox's means, for the killing of the Earl of Crawford's man. The king answered, ' Master, are you not yet contented and sufficiently revenged? If you had not turned that night to Ruthven, these things, which were then devised, would never have taken effect. Well, Master, I will forgive you ; and if you will conform yourself now to my request, your losses shall be faithfully repaired you hereafter.'—' Sir,' said he, ' what is your will? Command me in any thing : your majesty shall be obeyed,—yea, were it in the killing of the best that are about your majesty.' The king answered, ' Master, I mean not so : but because I think it stands not with my honour to be guided by other men's will, I would things were changed,—which you only may perform, if you follow my device. None mistrusteth you ; and, therefore, I will come to the Glamis, where you may have such power for that effect, that I will remain

your prisoner, so that you debar these from me who hath me at their devotion.' To conclude, the other hath agreed thereto, and shall conclude therein, if good counsel prevent it not. * * *

"As these things must come to light, so would I they so should be used, as the chief intelligence should be known not to have come from hence; otherwise I shall be suspected, and incur the king's hatred and the Master of Glamis's displeasure."

No. XIX.

Walsingham's Embassy to the Scottish Court in September, 1583,
page 366.

The following letter, from the State-paper Office, relates to this interesting embassy:—

WALSINGHAM TO BURGHLEY.

"Edinburgh, 6th September, 1583.

"My very good Lord,—Since I last wrote unto your lordship I have received three sundry letters from you, by the which I find your lordship hath obtained so much leisure as to see your house at Burghley; where I could have been content, having finished here, to her majesty's contentment the charge committed to me, to have met your lordship.—I mean, with the leave of God, according to my promise made to Sir Thomas Cecil, to see him there, and to survey such faults as have been committed in your buildings by reason of your lordship's absence; and yet am I in hope to come time enough in my return to see him at Snape; for here I see little hope to do any good, so resolutely and violently are they carried into a course altogether contrary to the amity of this crown, which by the better sort is greatly disliked of: and it is thought that they which have the whole managing of the affairs cannot long stand, so hateful do they grow generally to all estates in this realm.

"Though I press my audience very earnestly, yet can they not resolve neither of the time nor place. They are now, as I learn, busily occupied how they may excuse their breaches of promises and other attempts against her majesty, but most especially how they may excuse the late outrage committed in the middle marches, by yielding fair words and promises for satisfaction. This kind of proceeding cannot but render them hateful that now manage the affairs; for I find the borderers, the loose men only excepted, generally

inclined to continue good peace with England. The Burrows, also, who live by traffick, and are grown to be wealthy by the long-continued peace between the two realms, do not willingly hear of any breach. The ministers, who foresee how greatly the common cause should be shaken if discord between the two nations should break out, will not omit to do their best endeavours to prevent the same. I will not fail, at my access, to press both speedy redress and full satisfaction, as well of that outrage as of divers others committed this last month. * * It shall be necessary for her majesty, in these doubtful times, considering how they stand affected that have now the helm in hand here, to place some horsemen and footmen upon the borders for a season, which may serve well for some other purpose, as your lordship shall hereafter understand. * * *—At Edinburgh, the 6th September, 1583.

“Your lordship’s, &c.

“FRANCIS WALSINGHAM.

“After I had written my letter, Mr. James Melvil came unto me from the king to excuse the delay of my audience, without bringing any certain knowledge when the same should be granted, which moved me to deal roundly with him.”

END OF VOL. VI.

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